P.E.T. PUBLICATIONS



BIOGRAPHY OF

# IMAM HUSAYN عليه السلام

COMPOSED BY

TALIB HUSSAIN ZAIDI

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# IMAM HUSAYN عَلَيهِ السَّلَام

# ZIYARAT OF IMAM HUSAYN (a.s.)

Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Adam, the sincerely attached friend of Allah! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Nooh, the Prophet of Allah! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Ibrahim, the intimate friend of Allah! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Musa, who spoke to Allah! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Isa, who received peace, joy and mercy from Allah! Peace be on you the inheritor of Muhammad the dearest beloved of Allah! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of the Amir al Muminin, peace be on him. Peace be on you, O the son of Muhammad al Mustafa! Peace be on you, O the son of Ali al Murtaza! Peace be on you, O the son of Fatimah Zahra! Peace be on you, O the son of Khadijah Kubra! Peace be on you, O he whose blood-claimer is Allah,

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ آدَمَ صِفْوَةِ اللهِ

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ نُوْحٍ نَبِيِّ اللهِ

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ اِبْرَاهِيْمَ خَلِيْلِ اللهِ

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ مُوْسٰى كَلِيْمِ اللهِ

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ عِيْسٰى رُوْحِ اللهِ

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ مُحَمَّدٍ حَبِيْبِ اللهِ

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ اَمِيْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمُصْطَفٰى

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابْنَ عَلِيٍّ الْمُرْتَضٰى

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابْنَ فَاطِمَةَ الزَّهْرَاءِ

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ابْنَ خَدِيْجَةَ الْكُبْرٰى

اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ثَارَ اللهِ

وَابْنَ ثَارِهِ
وَالْوِتْرَ الْمَوْتُورَ
اَشْهَدُ اَنَّكَ قَدْ اَقَمْتَ الصَّلٰوةَ
وَاٰتَيْتَ الزَّكٰوةَ
وَاَمَرْتَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَنَهَيْتَ عَنِ
الْمُنْكَرِ
وَاَطَعْتَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ
حَتّٰى اَتٰيكَ الْيَقِيْنُ فَلَعَنَ اللّٰهُ
اُمَّةً قَتَلَتْكَ وَلَعَنَ اللّٰهُ
اُمَّةً ظَلَمَتْكَ وَلَعَنَ اللّٰهُ
اُمَّةً سَمِعَتْ بِذٰلِكَ فَرَضِيَتْ بِهٖ
يَا مَوْلَايَ يَا اَبَا عَبْدِ اللّٰهِ
اَشْهَدُ اَنَّكَ كُنْتَ نُوْرًا فِي الْاَصْلَابِ
الشَّامِخَةِ
وَالْاَرْحَامِ الْمُطَهَّرَةِ
لَمْ تُنَجِّسْكَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةُ بِاَنْجَاسِهَا
وَلَمْ تُلْبِسْكَ مِنْ مُدْلَهِمَّاتِ
ثِيَابِهَا
وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّكَ مِنْ دَعَائِمِ الدِّيْنِ
وَاَرْكَانِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ

He is the bood-claimer of your father also, as those who persecuted you, your relatives and friends have not been punished for their crimes. I bear witness that, verily, you established the prayers, gave the prescribed share to the needy, commanded to do what is right and lawful, not to do that which is wrong and unlawful, obeyed Allah, and His Messenger, till the inevitable came unto you. So Allah condemns those, who killed you, to eternal punishment; Allah casts those, who maltreated you, into Hell, Allah damns those who heard this event and rested satisfied. O my Mawla! O Aba Abdullah! I bear witness that, verily, you were a light in the sublime loins, and purified wombs; the impurities of ignorance did not (even) touch you, nor its solid and dirty bearing could ever smear you, I bear witness that, verily, you are the mainstay of the religion, and the supporter of the faithfuls.

وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّكَ الْاِمَامُ الْبَرُّ
التَّقِيُّ الرَّضِيُّ الزَّكِيُّ الْهَادِي
الْمَهْدِيُّ
وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ الْاَئِمَّةَ مِنْ وُلْدِكَ
كَلِمَةُ التَّقْوٰى وَاَعْلَامُ الْهُدٰى
وَالْعُرْوَةُ الْوُثْقٰى وَالْحُجَّةُ عَلٰى
اَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا
وَاُشْهِدُ اللّٰهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ
وَاَنْبِيَائَهُ
وَرُسُلَهُ اَنِّي بِكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ
وَبِاِيَابِكُمْ مُوْقِنٌ بِشَرَائِعِ دِيْنِي
وَخَوَاتِيْمِ عَمَلِي
وَقَلْبِي لِقَلْبِكُمْ سِلْمٌ
وَاَمْرِي لِاَمْرِكُمْ مُتَّبِعٌ
صَلَوَاتُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَعَلٰى اَرْوَاحِكُمْ وَعَلٰى اَجْسَادِكُمْ
وَعَلٰى اَجْسَامِكُمْ وَعَلٰى شَاهِدِكُمْ
وَعَلٰى غَائِبِكُمْ وَعَلٰى ظَاهِرِكُمْ
وَعَلٰى بَاطِنِكُمْ

I bear witness that, verily, you are a pious, God-fearing, favourite, wise and rightly guided guide (Imam). I bear witness that the Imams, in your progeny, are the *words of wisdom*, the signs of guidance, the safe handle, Islam, the decisive arguments for the mankind. I call Allah to give witness, and also His angels, His prophets, His messengers, that, verily, I believe in (all of) you, that I am sure of my return with you, joined to the divine laws of my belief, and my accomplishments; my mind and soul resigned to your obedience, my conduct following the example of your behaviour. Blessings of Allah be on (all of) you, on your souls, on your bodies, on your forms, (when) you are in view, (when) you are out of sight, and on your substance.

SHAH AST **HUSAYN** (A.S.)
BADSHAH AST **HUSAYN** (A.S.)
DIN AST **HUSAYN**
DIN PANAH AST **HUSAYN** (A.S.)
SIR DAT NADAT DAST
DAR DAST-E YAZID
HAQQA KEY BINA-E LA ILLAH
AST **HUSAYN** (A.S.)
Husayn (a.s.) is the King of Kings,
*Din* is Husayn and protector of
*Din* is Husayn (a.s.);
(Husayn [a.s.]) gave his head
(in the way of Allah)
but did not give his hand in the
hands of Yazid (being allegiance);
truly, foundation of LA ILLAH
is Husayn (a.s.)

# PREFACE

The message of Karbala gave mankind a new vision, a new sense of purpose, peace and good will, love and endurance in the society, where hatred corruption and lust of power was spreading like a virus.

The history of mankind always remained a chain of successful and failing revolutions, one replacing another. The message of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) was in the true sense of word a revolution, which taught all humans to be one, originally from the same creator.

Prophet Muhamamd (s.a.w.) after great efforts did succeed in creating a soceity based upon the values he preached, but in 682 CE i.e. forty years after the death of Prohet the society had conceived started crumbling, the values he held dear were diminishing, those who opposed him during his life grasped the power. Their rule was a reign of terror, the prophets traditions were being slaughtered, the fear and greed remained the only motivations. The general public was helpless and remained quite. It seemed that no one would be able to challenge the oppressor.

To prove that prophet's message is right, some one had to take a stand and this could be only his grandson Imam Husayn bin Ali, who stood up against the Umayyed ruler - Yazid bin Muawiya. When Imam Husayn (a.s.) refused to recognise the anti Islamic rule of Yazid, he was trapped shroudly and was surrounded by Yazid's army and brought to desert of Karbala.

Here he had to udnergo unimaginable calamaties, his family and friends butchered right before his eyes, and he stood all alone completely worn out physically withered and lean, hungry and thirsty, pale and thin on the sands of Karbala, a daring feat it was. All this required so bust energy, enduring vitality, unyielding will, great patience and firm belief.

In the end he too was slaughtered mercilessly, but his mission survivied the revolution of Prophet Muhammad (s..a.w.) was revived.

This book is a narration of his journey and the historic battle of Karbala which tells us that by butchering Imam Husayn (a.s.) and plundering his family, Yazid assured his defeat, now it is more than thirteen centuries and Imam Husayn (a.s.) the prophet's grandson is still a source of inspiration and will always remain for humanity at large.

# BIRTH

It was Thursday the 3rd of Shaban, in the 4th year of *hijra*, when our beloved Prophet - Muhammad (s.a.), Sayyida Fatima Zahra (s.a.) and Imam Ali (a.s.) were blessed with a second son who was named Husayn. According to the traditionist he was the first in the world to be named Husayn and t his name was revealed to the Holy Prophet by Allah. His *kunniyat* was Abu Abdullah with its various forms such as Aba Abdillah, Abi Abdillah etc.

The sublimity of character and dignity achieved by Imam Husayn's (a.s.) ancestor may be high lighted briefly as follows:

1. Kabah, which was the centre of all religious feelings, passions and ceremonies of the Arab world as the House of Allah was built by his great ancestor Prophet Ibrahim, assisted by his son, Prophet Ismail (a.s.).
2. His next ancestor Prophet Ismail son of Prophet Ibrahim, had earned the honoured title of *Zabeeh ul-lah.* He had also the distinction of having assisted his father, Prophet Ibrahim in the construction of Kabah.
3. Another succeeding ancestor of his, the great grandfather of the Holy Prophet, Abdul Muttalib evinced the same godly spirit of offering sacrifice for Allah when he voluntarily pledged to sacrifice his son Abdullah in the name of Allah. However, the event did not actually take place as some notables of the family suggested the sacrificing of a hundred camels as an alternative and Abdullah was eventually saved. Nevertheless both Abdul Muttalib and Abdullah had proved their metal by originally agreeing to the idea.
4. Abdul Muttalib has the credit of collecting together all the tribes of Muzar.

5. He also enjoyed the high position of the caretaker of Kabah and the chief administrator of the Hajj affairs during the season of that great religious performance.

6. He always acted as the representative of the Arabs in all internal as well as external matters.

7. He helped the poor during famines and other similar afflictions.

8. He was reckoned as the head chief of all the Arab tribes.

9. He was regarded as the leader of the people not only by the dint of his excellence as a warrior but also by virtue of high spiritual position.

10. It was he who took the initiative in getting all the chiefs of the other tribes subscribe to an agreement always to support the cause of the oppressed as against the oppressor even though it was against the original Arab custom of supporting the tribe or clan whether right or wrong. The inter tribal agreement was called *halful fazool* and served as a sort of charter of Basic Human Rights among the tribes.

11. This resplendence of Imam Husayn's (a.s.) ancestors was further enhanced when Allah chose Muhammad (s.a.) as His Prophet for the guidance of mankind.

12. And to crown all this, his own father Ali (a.s.) came out to be the foremost figure in Islam with merits, distinctions and achievements not available in any other personality after the Holy Prophet.

13. Imam Husayn (a.s.) had the honour or being the son of Sayyida Fatima (s.a.), the pious and beloved daughter of the Holy Prophet known as *Sayyiddatun Nisa-il Alameen* (leader of all women) who set the best example of righteous and correct womanhood on earth.

Ibn Talha Shafeii writes that the Holy Prophet had chosen the titles of Syed and Sibtain for Imam Husayn (a.s.).

In addition, he is known by numerous titles such as Al Imamil Abid, Ar Rake, As Sajid, but the most popular title is Syed-ash-Shohada (the chiefs) of the Martyrs). Like the Prophet Yahya, Imam Husayn too was born after only six months of pregnancy.

A few days before his birth, Ummi Fazl, the wife of Abbas ibn Abd al Muttalib, saw in a dream that a part of the Holy Prophet's flesh parted from his body and fell in her lap. She related the dream to the Holy Prophet, who interpreted it in the following manner:

"A son will be born to my daughter and the infant will be given to you for nursing."

After the birth of Imam Husayn, Sayyida Fatima Zahra became weaker, so the new born was given in the charge of Ummi Fazl for nursing.

The Holy Prophet had to undertake a journey around the expected time of the birth of Imam Husayn (a.s.), so he instructed Sayyida Fatima (s.a.): "If the child is born in my absence do not give your milk but wait till I come back from the journey." He returned the day after the birth of Imam Husayn. He visited the house of Sayyida Fatima, who brought her son to him. The Holy Prophet took the child in his arms and gave his own tongue in the mouth of the child. That was the first feed of Imam Husayn (a.s.) The Holy Prophet said: "HUSAYN MINNI WA ANA MINAL HUSAYN." - "Husayn is from me and I am from Husayn." The first portion of this important utterance of the Holy Prophet (s.a.) could be interpreted to refer to the physical fact that Husayn (a.s.) was a scion of the Holy Prophet (s.a.) and his direct descendant, but the second portion does not allow this sense to stand as the Holy Prophet (s.a.) cannot be said to be from Husayn (a.s.) by way of physical descendant. This

can therefore mean that the Holy Prophet's (s.a.) mission and achievements would survive only through Imam Husayn (a.s.) He (the Holy Prophet) announced the *azan* (call to come in *masjid)* in right ear and *iqamah* (caution to start the *salat*) in left ear of his beloved Husayn and sacrificed a ram (a male sheep) on (his) behalf in the rites of *aqiqa*.

He told Sayyida Fatima Zahra that after shaving his head she should give in charity silver equal to the weight of his hair.

Imam Ali bin Husayn Zayn al Abidin said that when his father was born, Jibrail came and said: "O Muhammad, Allah sends you *salam* and *salawat* and congratulate you on the birth of a son. He asks you to say to Ali: 'You are to me as Harun was to Musa, therefore the names of your sons should be *shabbar* and *shabbir* like the sons of Harun. The elder son of Harun was named *shabbar* and the younger was named *shabbir*."

The Holy Prophet said: "These names are in Hebrew and my mother tongue is Arabic." Jibrail said: "Then choose Hasan and Husayn which are equivalent to *shabbar* and *shabbir*."

Sayyida Fatima Zahra related to the Holy Prophet that, at the time of delivery of Husayn, two very attractive midwives, not known to her, came into the house to help in bringing forth the child. They had brought a large basin and a drum, full of water. When Husayn was born, they put him in the basin and washed him thoroughly. Then they disappeared. The Holy Prophet said that those two midwives were virgins of paradise who had brought the basin from there and the water was from *salsabil* and *kawthar*.

Salman Farsi had narrated a tradition, saying:

"I heard the Holy Prophet say concerning (Imam) Hasan and

(Imam) Husayn: 'O Allah, I love both of them. Therefore love him whoever loves them.' Then he said: 'Whoever loves Hasan and Husayn, is one whom I love. Whomever I love, Allah loves him, and whomever Allah loves, He will give him permission to enter paradise. Whoever hates them, I hate and Allah hates. Whomever Allah hates, He will throw him into the fire.' Then he said: "These two sons of mine are my two plants of sweet *basil* to sweeten the world."

Imam Husayn (a.s.) was the real image of the Holy Prophet. He was the most handsome next to the Holy Prophet. Imam Hasan (a.s.) was like the Prophet (s.a.), from his head to his chest, while Imam Husayn (a.s.) was like him from his chest to his feet. From far and wide people came to see him so that they could once again have a chance to see the Holy Prophet. The divine will of Allah was to make him like the Holy Prophet as he was going to represent the Holy Prophet in Karbala to save Islam.

Almighty Allah awarded Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn with the title of *sardar jawanan jannat* (the chiefs of the youths of paradise). The Holy Prophet had strongly advised the sincere and true believers to love, respect and obey both his grandsons in this world as will the inhabitants of paradise in the next world. The Holy Prophet made it evident to Muslims on many occasions that the character of these two is so high and would always remain so high, that to follow their footsteps or to carry out their commands would be the sure way to earn Allah's pleasure. On one occasion he said, "These two sons of mine (Hasan and Husayn) are Imams whether they sit or rise. That is, they must be obeyed whether they make peace or rise for a holy war. It is reported on the authority of Imam Jafar al Sadiq (a.s.) that once Imam Hasan (a.s.) said to his companions:

"Allah has two cities - one in the east and the other in the west - in which Allah's creatures are never interested in disobeying Him. Yet, by God, Allah's proof to His creatures, both in those two and between them, is no other than myself and my brother - Husayn (a.s.)."

A narration of the same kind is reported from Imam Husayn (a.s.) when he said to the followers of Ibn Ziyad on the day of deprivation,

"What is the matter with you that makes you help each other against me? Or (don't you see) if you kill me, you kill Allah's proof to yourselves? No, by God, there is not between Jabilqa and Jabirsa a son of a prophet through whom God provides proof to you other than myself." He meant by Jabilqa and Jabirsa, the two cities which Imam Hasan (a.s.) had mentioned.

When Imam Husayn was born there was a great celebration in the heavens and Allah sent all the angels to congratulate the Holy Prophet, Imam Ali and Sayyida Fatima. Rows and rows of angels from the heavens started their journey to the earth carrying Allah's blessings. On the way they met Fitras, an angel who had lost his wings as Almighty Allah had punished him for some wrong acts. When he saw the angels going somewhere he asked the leading angel, Jibrail: "Where are you all going?" Jibrail replied: "We are going to the house of Sayyida Fatima, to congratulate the Holy Prophet and Imam Ali as they have been blessed with another son, Husayn." Sensing the blessings of Allah, Fitras thought to accompany Jibrail and requested him to take him alongwith him. With the permission of Almighty Allah, Jibrail carried Fitras on his wings to the house of Sayyida Fatima. Upon reaching the house, they congratulated the Ahl ul Bayt. Taking the opportunity of such a very happy occasion Fitras explained to the Holy Prophet his grievance of

losing his wings as punishment and requested him (the Holy Prophet) to pray for his forgiveness. *Rahmatulil alamin* prayed for Fitras and advised him to fly over the cradle of Imam Husayn. While Fitras was busy in testifying love, respect and obedience to Imam Husayn, his wing-roots touched the cradle of the grandson of the *rahmatulil alamin* and all of a sudden he got his wings again. Saluting the *panjatan pak* (the pure and pious five), he returned to the heaven flying with his own wings. This event shows that Allah gives *shifa* even today to those who visit, touch and kiss the *zarih* or *rawzah* of Imam Husayn.

After the celebration, all the angels retunred to heaven with the blessings of Imam Husayn. Only Jibrail remained behind, with a sad face. When the Holy Prophet asked him the reason, he replied: "Allah had asked me to tell you about this son (Husayn) that he will be the saviour of Islam, after you he will represent you in the 61 Hijra in the plain desert of Karbala. He, his family and friends will be deprived of food and water for 3 days and then brutally killed and his holy body will be trampled by horses. His family will be looted, and their veils taken away, they will be held captive." The Holy Prophet and Jibrail were both crying in sobs Sayyida Fatima (s.a.), who was listening to the conversation, could no longer control her anguish, so she asked Jibrail: "Why will my Husayn be treated like this and will the people who kill him be *kafir*?" Jibrail said: "No, they will be from your father's *ummah*." At this she again asked the Holy Prophet: "Will you be there?" He said: "No." "Will Ali and myself be there?" He said: "No." "Father then who will cry for my beloved Husayn" she inquired. "My beloved daughter, do not lament, as for your Husayn Allah will send a group of people in every corner of the world who will lament for your dear son and will tell about his tragedy till the day of judgement. They will be the *shias* and the lovers of the Ahl ul Bayt." Hearing

this, Sayyida Fatima was consoled and said that in this world and in the hereafter she would see to it that the said group would go to paradise, that she would always be with them to collect their tears in her handkerchief and bless them.

On another occasion Sayyida Fatima was sleeping and the innocent baby, Husayn, was crying in the cradle. Suddenly the cradle automatically began swinging and someone was talking to the child. She referred the matter to her father, the Holy Prophet, who said that it was the honour of Husayn that angel Jibrail was serving the baby.

It is reported by Imam Jafar al Sadiq (a.s.) that at one time, Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn were wrestling and Prophet Muhammad (s.a.) was watching them. All of a sudden the Prophet (s.a.) said: "O Hasan, get Husayn, pull him down."

Sayyida Fatima (s.a.) said: "Dear Father! You are backing and encouraging Hasan against Husayn who is younger."

The Prophet (s.a.) said, "Jibrail is backing Husayn and telling him to pull Hasan down." [Fusul ul Mohemma, by Ibn Sabbagh al-Maliki, page 171.]

It is reported by ibn Asakir on the authority of Abi al-Bakhtari who said: "Once Omar ibn Khattab was addressing from the pulpit. Husayn ibn Ali, who was about 9 years of age, got up and said: "Come down from the pulpit of my father."

Imam Ali (a.s.) got up and said: "By Allah, no one asked him to say that. Do not get offended."

Said Omar: "I am not offended, O son of my uncle. It is true what he has said. [Tarikh Khulufa, by Suyuti page 143.]

# CHILDHOOD

The childhood of both, Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn, was very different from that of common children. They were brought up in the lap of the Holy Prophet, Imam Ali and Sayyida Fatima with the revelation of verses of the Holy Quran brought by Jibrail. They were brought up in the light of the holy Quran and the sermons of the Holy Prophet.

Once when Imam Husayn was young he came in the mosque where the Holy Prophet was delivering a sermon. Imam Husayn's clothes got tangled in his foot and when he was about to fall the Holy Prophet got down from the pulpit in the middle of his sermon and carried him and made him sit in his lap. People wondered why the Holy Prophet had to interrupt his sermon. The Holy Prophet seeing the restlessness on the peoples' faces, explained: "He is the child who will save Islam when Islam will be in danger."

Once on the night of *id* (festival), both Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn came to their mother Sayyida Fatima Zahra and asked: "Dear mother, tomorrow is the *id* day. Where are our new dresses?" Sayyida Fatima Zahra kissed them and said: "Inshallah, the tailor will bring your clothes tomorrow and you will wear them." When the children went to sleep Sayyida Fatima Zahra stood up for prayers and offered two *rak-at salat* and raised her hands in supplication saying: "O Lord of the world I am your slave, and you are my master, I am the daughter of your beloved Prophet. You know very well what I have told my dear Hasan and Husayn. My Lord, if they will get the new dresses they will be happy. You will also be pleased on their rejoicing. Oh Allah, let not the word of Your Fatima fail, I depend on you. Ameen."

Early in the morning the two beloved sons of Sayyida Fatima woke up and after offering their *fajr salat* went to their mother and asked: "Have our new dresses come?" Sayyida Fatima Zahra was about to answer when a voice at the door was heard saying: "O, Ahl ul Bayt! Here are the dresses for Hasan and Husayn." Sayyida Fatima Zahra received them and then offered two *rak-at salat* in thanksgiving to the Almighty Allah for granting her supplication and making her children happy. Umm-i Salma, the righteous wife of the Holy Prophet said: "I had never seen such beautiful clothes before." On inquiring from the Holy Prophet, he replied they were the heavenly dresses which they received from Allah. Then they went to the mosque with their grandfather. On returning from the mosque they told the Holy Prophet that other children had their own camels or horses. They too would also like to ride. The Holy Prophet took both of them on his shoulders and gave them his hair to hold on to as the reins of a horse. The children thence said, what about sound of the horse? Then the Holy Prophet imitated the sound of the hourse *al uf al uf* repeatedly. People coming from the mosque saw spectacle scene and commented what a nice ride the children have got. The Holy Prophet replied: "But look what lovely riders I have."

It is mentioned in Kamzool Sharaeb that once a man came to the Holy Prophet (s.a.) and presented a deer cub to him. Imam Hasan (a.s.) was there at that time so the Prophet (s.a.) presented the cub to him. When Imam Husayn (a.s.) saw the deer cub with his brother, he also went to his grandfather and insisted on having a dear cub too. He did not weep for long when there appeared a deer with a young one went straight to the Holy Prophet (s.a.) and in an elegant language said:

"O' Master! I had two cubs - the hunter caught one and presented to you and I have myself brought the other one.

When I was in the jungle I heard a voice saying: 'The beloved grandson of the Holy Prophet (s.a.) is insisting for the deer cub, so go there and present your young one to him. So I have come before you to present my child for your grandson."

The holy Prophet (s.a.) blessed the deer and presented the gift of the deer cub to Imam Husayn (a.s.). [ref. Rauzat us Shohada]

Once the Holy Prophet was offering prayers in the mosque. Imam Husayn, who was young, came and sat on the back of his grandfather. Messenger Jibrail informed the prophet that Allah has asked him to prolong his prostration till Husayn stepped down of his own will. The Holy Prophet continued his prostration and repeated *subhana rabi al ala wa bi hamdih* 70 times till Imam Husayn got down; then the Holy Prophet raised his head from prostration. After completing the *salat* people who were praying behind the Holy Prophet asked him the reason for such a long prostration. The Holy Prophet replied: "It was Almighty Allah's command. I prolonged the prostration till Husayn had stepped down of his own accord."

"Nor does he (the apostle of Allah) speak out of his own desire, it is but a revelation revealed [Al Najm : 3, 4]

Here the Almighty Allah wanted to show the rank of Imam Husayn who would give his life and everything in the plains of Karbala to save Islam.

Once the Holy Prophet was sitting with his grandson Husayn on one side on his lap and Ibrahim (his own son) on the other side. The messenger Jibrail appeared and said: "O apostle of Allah this is the will of Allah to take one of these two children, what do you wish?" The Holy Prophet said: "Let Ibrahim be taken away and Husayn be spared as I need him for preservation of Islam."

Once Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn were doing some calligraphy. When they had finished their task they went to their mother, Sayyida Fatima, and asked her to judge whose writing was better. Sayyida Fatima advised them to go to their father, Imam Ali. When they went to their father he told them to go to their grandfather, the Holy Prophet. After seeing the calligraphy he said: "Only your mother Sayyida Fatima could give the judgement in this matter. Thus once again they came back to their mother. Sayyida Fatima said: "Both of the calligraphies are very good", but Hasnain insisted she select only one as the best.

In view of such a critical situation, Sayyida Fatima took her necklace which contained seven pearls. She broke it, the pearls scattered on the ground. She asked Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn to collect the pearls and whoever would collect more pearls, his calligraphy would be considered best.

It was a miracle for the love of Imam Hasan and Husayn that each one collected three pearls while the remaining one (the seventh pearl) turned into two equal parts, thus each Imam took one part of the seventh pearl and thus they both were equal in degree of calligraphy.

The miracle was the will of Almighty Allah, to show that Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn were equal in merits of all kinds.

Not only the Imams but all five *(panjatan)* are equal in all merits.

It would not be wrong if one recalls the *hadith:*

"Our first is Muhammad,
Our middle is Muhammad,
Our last is Muhammad, and

All of us are Muhammad,
In creation and deeds."

*Panjatan* are from one *nur* (light)

# REVELATION OF SURAH AD DAHR

One morning Sayyida Fatima Zahra found both her sons ill. When the Holy Prophet came to see them, he advised Imam Ali and Sayyida Fatima to make a promise to Allah that they would observe fasts for three consecutive days if their sons got well. Soon they returned to normal health. So Imam Ali, Sayyida Fatima, Hasan, Husayn and Fizza fasted for three days. Each day a different person came at the time of breaking the fast and knocked at the door. The man who came on the first day said:

"O Ahl ul Bayt of the Messenger of Allah, I am a poor man. I am hungry. Give me something to eat."

All that was there to eat in the house was given away to him. All of them took only water to break their fasts and went to sleep without food.

The man who came on the second day said:

"O Ahl ul Bayt of the Messenger of Allah, my parents are dead. I am a destitute. Will you satisfy my hunger?"

All that was there to eat in the house was given away to him. All of them took only water to break their fasts and went to sleep without food.

The man who came on the third day said:

"O Ahl ul Bayt of the Messenger of Allah, I am a just-now-freed slave. Give me some food."

All that was there to eat in the house was given away to him. All of them took only water to break their fasts and went to sleep without food.

After completion of the three fasts Sayyida Fatima offered prayers of thankfulness to Allah, and then the Holy Prophet informed her that Jibrail had brought verses in their praise.

"They fulfil their vows, and fear the day whose evil shall spread far and wide.
And (inspite of their own needs) they give food, for love of Him, to the poor, and the orphan and the captive,
(Saying): "We feed you only for the sake of Allah; we do not seek any recompense from you, nor (even) thank.
Verily we fear from our Lord a stern day of distress."
"So Allah will guard them from the evil of that day, and cause them to find cheerfulness and happiness." (Surah Dahr verses 7 to 11.)

## EVENT OF GHADIR

Imam Husayn was with the Holy Prophet for his last *hajj* when he heard the message of Ghadir:

"(O Muhammad) deliver what has been sent down to you from your Lord; and if you have not delivered it, then, (it will be as if) you have not delivered His message (at all); and surely Allah will protect you from (the mischief) of men; verily Allah does not guide a disbelieving people." [ Ma-idah : 67]

After receiving this revelation *(wahi)* the Holy Prophet delivered a sermon at Ghadir Khum under a clothe spread as a canopy on two large trees. The Holy Prophet said:

"O my people! I am going to be recalled shortly and I must comply. I shall be interrogated - what will you say then?"

The entire audience answered:

"We shall bear witness that you did convey to us the message of Allah, and tried your best to guide us on the right path and always gave us good counsel. May Allah bless you with a good reward."

The Holy Prophet proceeded: "Why do you not bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and messenger, and that paradise is true, that the day of judgement will doubtlessly come and that Allah will raise to life the dead from their graves? They said:

"O Yes! We bear witness to all this." Then he said: "O Allah! You also be my witness." Then he said: "O my people! Allah is my Mawla and I am Mawla of the faithful and I have superior right and control over their lives. And this Ali is the Mawla of all those of whom I am Mawla. O Allah! Love him who loves him and hate him who hates him." He further said: "O my people! I will precede you, you also shall arrive at the pool of Kawthar, the pool wider than the distance between Basrah and Sana, and there are on the pool as many goblets of silver as stars. When you shall reach me I shall interrogate you about your behavior towards the two invaluable assets after my death. The major asset is the book of Allah, one end of which is in the hand of Allah, and the other end is in your hands. Grasp ; it tightly and do not go astray and do not change or amend it. The other asset

is my progeny, who are my Ahl ul Bayt. Allah has informed me that the two will not part from each other before they reach me at the citrus of Kawthar. And when the Holy Prophet had proclaimed Ali (a.s.) as *Mawla*, (Imam of his followers and his successor), Allah caused to descend on him the same day the verse: "Today, I have perfected for you your faith and completed my favour upon you and chosen for you Islam (to be) the religion," (Maidah : 3)

## AYAH TATHIR

In the event of the Blanket *(kisa)* also the five were present and at that moment Allah revealed the *ayah tathir.*

"Verily, verily Allah intends but to keep off from you (every kind of) uncleanness, O you the people of the House, and purify you (with) a thorough purification." [33 : 33]

and sent his messenger - Jibrail to say that the whole of the universe was created in the love of these five, Muhammad (s.a.), Ali (a.s.), Fatima (s.a.), Hasan (a.s.) and Husayn (a.s.).

## MUBAHILA

Imam Husayn was 4 years old when the event of Mubahila took place and the Holy Prophet took his family especially Husayn in his arms so that the world could see that these were the five who would come to save Islam, may it be in Mubahila or the desert of Karbala.

The following verse refers to this famous event:

And say to him who dispute with you therein after the knowledge has come to you (O Muhammad): 'Come, let us summon our

sons, and your sons, and our women and your women, and ourselves and yourselves, and then let us humbly pray and invoke the curse of Allah on the liars!" [Ali Imran : 61]

The Holy Prophet was sending invitations to all to accept the true religion of Allah. Tribes after tribe, regions after regions, were coming into the fold of Islam. One such invitation was sent to the Christians of Najran, a town in Yemen, in the 9th year of Hijra. A deputation of 60 scholars came to discuss the matter with the Holy Prophet. Abdul Masih, the chief of monk, asked him as to who was the father of Isa, thinking that the Holy Prophet would accept God as the father of Isa. The following verse:

"Verily, the likeness of Isa with Allah is as the likeness of Adam; He created him out of dust, then He said to him: "Be!" and he was" [Ali Imran : 59]

The Holy Prophet presented to the Christians as a reply but they did not listen to reason. Then the Ayah-e Mubailah was revealed to call them to a spiritual contest by invoking the curse of Allah on the liars. The Christians agreed to this contest.

Early next morning, the 24th of the month of Dhilhijjah, the Holy Prophet sent Salman to the selected site, outside the city area, to set up a shelter for those whom he would take with him, as his sons, women and selves.

A large number of companions assembled in the masjid, making themselves available for the selection. On the opposite side of the field, selected for the contest, the Christians, with their selected men, women and children appeared on the scene.

At the appointed hour, a huge crowd, standing in wait, saw the

Holy Prophet coming in, Imam Husayn, in his arms, Imam Hasan holding his index finger, walking beside; him, Sayyida Fatima Zahra (s.a.), close to his heels and Imam Ali just behind her - as his son, women and selves. It should be noted that although there was provision for "women" and "selves" the Holy Prophet selected one "woman" and one "self" - Fatima and Ali, because there was no woman and no man among his followers at that time who could be brought into the contest of invoking the curse of Allah on the liars. They alone were the truthful ones.

The Holy Prophet raised his hands to the heaven and said:

"O my Lord! These are the people of my house."

The chief monk looked up and down at the faces of the Pure Five *(Panjatan Pak)*, from whom emanated a radiant and brilliant glow; and this sight filled him with awe and anguish. He cried out aloud:

"O Christian! I see the faces of those whose prayers would be answered even if they ask Allah to move a mountain, so do not continue this meeting. If they curse, you will be destroyed and no Christian will remain on earth until the day of resurrection."

The Christians saw the wisdom of their chief and readily agreed to arrive at a settlement. As there is no compulsion in religion (Baqarah : 256), the Holy Prophet gave them complete freedom to practice their faith. He also agreed to protect their lives and possessions; and for this service the Christians consented to pay a nominal fee *(jaziyah)*. It was an extraordinary manifestation of the glory of Islam; therefore, the followers of Muhammad and *ali* Muhammad celebrate this unique blessings of Allah (bestowed on Ahl ul Bayt) as a "thanksgiving" occasion of great joy and comfort. Not only through the great event of

Mubahila, but also on various other occasions, the Holy Prophet (s.a.) made it clear to the Muslims that they should always support and follow the Ahl ul Bayt because he could certainly read in the character of everyone among this Holy group that true Islam would be defended by them whenever it was faced with any kind of danger.

On another occasion he said:

"My Ahl ul Bayt are like the ark of Prophet Nooh (a.s.), whoever board it remains safe while whoever discards it is doomed." [Ref. Musnad of Imam Hambal and Maarif of Ibn Kutaiba]

# DEATH OF THE HOLY PROPHET

In the 11th year of *hijra* when Imam Husayn was seven years old his beloved grandfather, the Holy Prophet (s.a.), left the world.

Before dying he embraced Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husayn (a.s.) and instructed them to always pray *salat* especially *tahajjud* (an optional after midnight *salat*) and to bear with patience whatever troubles befall them and save Islam.

The Holy Prophet also gave out the declaration, the Hadeethus Thaqalayn, to the Muslims before leaving this world.

He said that he was leaving behind two very weighty things - the Holy Quran and the *Ahl ul Bayt*, and they will never be separated from each other until they reach him at the spring Kawthar.

If intelligently read, the Hadeethuth Thaqalayn clearly indicates that as long as the Holy Quran is present in the world, surely a

representative from the Ahlul Bayt i.e. one of the divinely commissioned Imams will also be present. It is a clear guidance that in this age also there is one from the Ahl ul Bayt - the last one of them the Holy Imam - Muhammad al Mahdi al Qaim (a.s.).

During the sacred life time of the Holy Prophet (s.a.) the members of his family, the Ahl ul Bayt, were the centre of attention of all Muslims because he had been mentioning their merits and high position continuously and exhorting the Muslims to follow them and to remain staunch in adherence to them.

However, soon after the departure of the Holy Prophet (s.a.) from this world there was a drastic change in the whole atmosphere.

Temporal authority now shifted from the Holy Household to people who came to be called caliphs.

The garden of Fidak was gifted to Sayyida Fatima (s.a.) when the following verse was revealed to the Holy Prophet:

"And give to the near of kin his due and to the needy and the wayfarer, and do not squander wastefully." [Bani Israil : 16]

Fidak was in the actual possession of Sayyida Fatima Zahra (s.a.) during the lifetime of her father, the income of which was distributed among the needy faithfuls.

To keep away the faithful adherents of the House of the Holy Prophet (s.a.) and to make the family destitute, as they wrongly understood the quality of the children of the Messenger of Allah, her representatives were driven away from the lands of Fidak and the property was taken in (nationalized) by force.

If the Ummah of her father had requested the daughter of their Benefactor, the "Mercy unto the worlds"; to give away her property as a gift to them, certainly she would have. She and her parents gave away millions for the cause of Islam. She was on record for giving out every thing she could lay her hands on. The pattern of her character was evident, but she could not give the property as a charity to a group of people who, in her opinion, were not the true representatives of her father, a religious condition laid down by Almighty Allah, which she, under no condition, could transgress.

She primarily wanted to bring the misguided friends of Islam in the open, to reveal their true colours. She established the truth beyond doubt that it was a motivated move against the family of the Holy Prophet (the Ahl ul Bayt).

After the death of the Holy Prophet, Imam Husayn (a.s.) as a child, accompanied his mother to seek justice from the ruling party on the matter of Fidak, but they asked for witness; so Sayyida Fatima (s.a.) covered from head to foot in a veil, accompanied by her two sons - Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husayn (a.s.) holding her hands went to Masjid-e Nabvi and presented them as her witnesses but they were refused by the ruling party. Although Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husayn's (a.s.) witness is accepted in the heaven by Allah, still they were refused by the ruling party and Fidak was taken away.

During those days he saw his father, Ali (a.s.), being dragged with a rope round his neck, through the streets by the ruling party.

## DEATH OF SAYYIDA FATIMA (s.a.)

It was 3 months after the death of his grand father, Imam

Husayn saw that people breaking and setting the door of their house on fire, which fractured his mother's rib. This injury was the cause of the death of his mother Sayyida Fatima (s.a.).He loved his mother very much.

## BIRTH OF HAZRAT ABBAS (a.s.)

After some time his father, Imam Ali (a.s.), married Fatima Kalbiya, who is known as Umul Banin (mother of sons). Hasnayn respected her as a mother but she always called herself their slave. Abbas (a.s.) was her eldest son,

By the will of Allah, certain similarities prevailed between the events that occurred at Imam Ali (a.s.)'s birth and at Hazrat Abbas (a.s.)'s birth. When Imam Ali (a.s) was born, he did not open his eyes, the Holy Prophet came to him and took him in his lap and in the prophet's arms, Imam Ali (a.s) opened his eyes for the first time in the world and looked at the holy face of the Prophet of Allah.

Similarly when Hazrat Abbas (a.s.) was born, Ummul Banin told Imam Husayn (a.s.) that the baby had not opened his eyes. As soon as Imam Husayn a.s. took the baby in his lap, the child opened his eyes and looked at Imam Husayn's (a.s.) face. The birth of Abbas (a.s.) was the answer of Imam Ali's (a.s.) prayers as he wanted a brave son who would represent him and help Imam Husayn (a.s.) in Karbala. These two brothers loved each other deeply.

When Imam Ali (a.s) was born, he was given to the holy Prophet who adopted him as his son and Imam Ali (a.s) remained with him and was brought up by him. Similarly, Hazrat Abbas (a.s) was given to Imam Husayn (a.s) and remained closely attached

to him. Hazrat Abbas (a.s) took in treating himself as the slave of Imam Husayn (a.s), addressing him not as brother, though he was a brother, but as *'Syed wo Maula'* My chief and my master.

In short, if the Holy Prophet had come into the world to present Islam and if Imam Ali (a.s) was given to him as an assistant and helper in his mission, Imam Husayn (a.s) had been sent by Allah to save Islam and re-establish it at Karbala and Hazrat Abbas (a.s) was given to Imam Husayn (a.s) to assist him in his holy mission. For the marked resemblance with his father, Hazrat Abbas (a.s) was known as 'Haider-e-Sani' (i.e Haider the second); and 'Qamar-e-Bani Hashim', i-e the moon of the Hashmites.

Imam Ali (a.s.) had always helped the Holy Prophet (s.a.) in times of peace and war was now leading a secluded life. His right of *khilafat* was taken away by the ruling party. Hasnayn (a.s.) had joined his father in the wars of Jamal, Siffin and Naharwan. The Ahl ul Bayt were so suppressed by the ruling party that we hardly know about their activities during this period of 24 years.

During the period he saw that although Ali (a.s.) was kept aloof from temporal authority of any kind by the ruling party, nevertheless, he cooperated with them in any affair, be it with regard to the solution of a juridical matter, or the conduct of any military operation.

Not much is known about Husayn (a.s.)'s life during the reign of the first two caliphs. Duirng this period Husayn (a.s.) must have been carefully observing the behaviour of his revered father and forming his own ideas as to how he would conduct himself when faced with the responsibilities of leadership of Islam in

any form whatsoever. Imam Husayn (a.s.) noted it carefully that religious law has a sanctity of its own, backed by the commands of Allah and the action of the Holy Prophet, and should in no case he confused or allowed to be modified or metamorphosed by the decisions and actions of the rulers, however strong he may be.

During the days of the *khilafat* of Umar, the Muslims were victorious in the battle of Qadsia and the two daughters of Yazdgard, Shahr Banu and Kanan Banu, were taken prisoner and brought to Madina. Caliph Umar planed to sell them but fortunately the matter was discussed with Imam Ali (a.s.) who reminded him that members of the royal families could not be sold, according to Islamic teachings. These girls should be set free and in fact be allowed to choose Muslim husbands. Because of this wise advice both the ladies were set free and Shahr Banu chose Imam Husayn (a.s.) to be her husband. She was the mother of Imam Zayn al Abidin (a.s.).

Once during Usman's caliphate there was some unrest and turmoil among the general public which was aggravated by the behaviour of Marwan (chief adviser and trusted counselor of Usman), so much that people besieged his house. Even in this critical time, Imam Ali (a.s.) on knowing that the supply of water to the caliph had been stopped, sent him water through his sons, Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husayn (a.s.). There were guards who did not allow any water to go in but seeing the grandsons of the Holy Prophet, they did not stop them as they knew how the Holy Prophet loved them. Imam Husayn (a.s.) must have certainly noted this cooperation of Imam Ali (a.s.) with the ruling caliph in all matters which did not conflict with any of the clear injunctions of Islam.

The second event notable from the point of view of its impact

on the life sketch of Imam Husayn (a.s.) is that on one occasion the fleet of Muawiya's army came and occupied the river bank denying water to Imam Ali's (a.s.) men. Imam Ali (a.s.) ordered his men to fight their way to the river and they soon took control of the river. However, Imam Ali (a.s) did not deny supply of water from the river to Muawiya's forces, despite the advice of his officers to the contrary. He magnanimously declared that water being the bounty of nature, was the right of every individual and should not be denied even to the foe standing face to face for active hostilities. Imam Husayn (a.s) was thus learning the sublime principle of nobility that even during war one should not deviate from the morns of civil conduct on the basis of which man distinguishes himself from beasts. How pricking it should be for the students of history to read that Imam Husayn (a.s) in Karbala and his faithful companions and women and children were all denied the use of water from this very river Euphrates under orders of the son of this very Muawiya (Yazid) only two decades afterwards on the sands of Karbala. Certainly no conscience worth the name can ever forgive the inhuman act of denying water to Imam Husayn (a.s) and his family and followers. As for Imam Husayn (a.s)'s own behaviour, it will be seen in due course how he acted on the high lesson leant by him from his noble father when he provided water from his own reserves to the thirsty soldiers as well as horses and camels of the contingent of Hur Bin Yazeed Riyahee who had come to intercept Imam Husayn(a.s)'s march towards Kufa and was therefore in the position of an enemy.

Once during the *khilafat* days of Imam Ali, Imam Husayn(a.s) was passing through a prison, Shimr called out and begged him to ask his father for his release and said that he would never forget this act of kindness. Imam Husayn(a.s) went to his father and pleaded his case. Imam Ali (a.s) said: "Shimr is a very cruel man who would one day kill you mercilessly and also

harass and beat up your family." Imam Husayn (a.s) replied:

"Father, I want to do him this favour so that he will remember this act of mine and not do what you have said, and in this way he will also be saved from committing a great sin."

So Imam Ali (a.s) released him. But Alas! We all know that Shimr became the killer of Imam Husayn (a.s) and he tortured the women and children of his family after his martyrdom.

Both Imam Hasan (a.s) and Imam Husayn (a.s) conducted themselves in the best interests of Islam so as to ensure its continued existence with all its true spirit and splendour. It was Imam Ali (a.s) who during the regime of the three caliphs was busy releasing the streams of knowledge through his sermons to those few who, mindful of God and the life hereafter, had gathered around him and remained attached to him. These sermons of Imam Ali, put together, are called the "Nahjul-Balagha" i.e the peak of Eloquence, which is the treasury of the highest Quranic knowledge and the highest treatise of the spirit of Islamic Philosophy. Before departing from this world, Imam Ali (a.s) as a dutiful father, left his most admirable specimen of Divine teaching, i.e his will, to Imam Hasan (a.s) and Imam Husayn (a.s):

"Remain ever mindful of your duties towards Islam; do not hanker after worldly position and self; do not worry for losses of this material world; always speak what corresponds to Allah's commands; appose the oppressor and support the oppressed; keep striving in the way of Allah by your wealth as well as life and never give up exhorting for good and forbidding evil lest the evil ones secure authority over you."

The way in which Imam Husayn (a.s) got the opportunity to

accomplish all these ideal instructions and the superb manner in which he acted on them is certainly unequalled, unparalleled, and unknown, elsewhere in human history.

## MARTYRDOM OF IMAM ALI (a.s.)

It was in *masjid* Kufa that Imam Ali (a.s) was injured by a poisoned sword by Ibn-e-Muljim on the 19th of Ramzan. Imam Hasan (a.s) and Imam Husayn (a.s) accompanied him home from the *masjid* and were by his bedside. Ibn Muljim, the murderer was brought to Imam Ali (a.s). He was tied very tightly by a rope. Imam Ali (a.s) asked the guards to loosen the rope. He said that if he lives he would punish him as he thought fit, and in case he died they should kill him by a single stroke of a sword and not to mutilate his body. Imam Ali (a.s.) succumbed to his injuries and met his Creator on the 21st of Ramazan. Imam Ali (a.s) left his son, Abbas (a.s) under the care of Imam Husayn (a.s) and told him to help and look after Imam Husayn (a.s) and his family in Karbala as he was to represent him there.

After the death of Imam Ali (a.s), Muawiya came in power. It was during the time of Imam Hasan's (a.s) *imamat*. But Imam Hasan (a.s) led a very quiet life.

Neither the Holy Prophet, nor Imam Ali (a.s) nor any of the other holy Imams were ever inclined towards the least enjoyment of this world. They were the rays of one and the same Divine Light destined to enlighten the world during their own respective times, in their respectively assigned ways to guide humanity to the right path.

There is the famous saying of Imam Ali (a.s) which gives out the actual attitude of the holy ones of the Ahl ul Bayt towards

this world and its enjoyments:-

*Ad-donya Teefaton wa tullaboha Kilab*

'The world is a corpse and its seekers are dogs'

During that period, Muawiya the son of Abu Sufian was the governer of Syria, appointed by Omar and strengthened by Osman. He was openly hostile towards the Ahl ul Bayt and corruption began to rule the destiny of man. People opposing corruption were plundered and mercilessly massacred. There was no safety or security of life or property particularly of those who were loyal to the house of the Holy Prophet, who called themselves Shias or the devotees of the Ahl ul Bayt. Preachers were ordered to curse Imam Ali (a.s) openly in their sermons from the pulpits. The public which had begged Imam Ali (a.s) to accept to caliphate and rule the state, by the crafty campaign of Muawiya, had turned disloyal, deceitful, hostile and treacherous.

## PERIOD OF IMAM HASAN (A.S.)

Imam Hasan (a.s), whose first concern was the peace and safety of the people, did not need any contested throne to exercise his divine rights. Ultimately in the interest of the welfare of the people and safety of the public life and property, Imam Hasan (a.s) relinquished the rule of the state of Muawiya under a written and signed treaty with the following terms:-

1 Muawiya should rule the stat strictly according to the word of Allah and the Holy Quran as depicted by the traditions of the Holy Prophet.

2 The people should be allowed to enjoy perfect peace

and security of life and property.

3 The persecution of the Shias i.e. the devotees of Imam Ali (a.s.) should at once be stopped and they should no more be harassed.

4 Muawiya should not in any way interfere with Imam Hasan (a.s) and Imam Huṣayn (a.s) or any one of the Ahl ul Bait .

5 The cursing of Imam Ali (a.s) on the pulpits, be at once stopped.

6 All prisoners, particularly the Shias who had been unlawfully put into prisons and mercilessly tortured therein should at once be released.

7 Muawiya should not appoint any heir to the throne of the caliphate but leave it to the decision of the Muslim public.

With the above treaty agreed to and signed by Muawiya, Imam Hasan (a.s) retired into complete seclusion, having no concern whatsoever with politics or any affairs of the state. In those difficult times. Imam Husayn (a.s) was always with his brother but the Omayyid enmity would not allow both the brothers to live in peace and spend their lives in devotion to God and guiding the people to a godly life on earth. Muawiya's main objective was to make the way for his son Yazeed to succeed him to the throne of his monarchical caliphate and hence Imam Hasan (a.s) was poisoned fatally. The sufferings of Imam Hasan (a.s) were of special intensity and the murderous situation he had to face was peculiar in its gravity and the patience,Imam Hasan (a.s) displayed was divinely superb and

exemplary. Imam Hasan (a.s.) had told Imam Husayn (a.s.) to burry him near the Holy Prophet, but the ruling party did not allow him to burry his brother there and started shooting arrows at his corpse. Imam Husayn (a.s) had to bring his corpse back home. He took out the arrows from his brother's dead body and then he buried him in Janatul Baqi next to his mother.

Before breathing his last, Imam Hasan (a.s) handed the charge of the *Imamat* to his brother Imam Husayn (a.s). Imam Husayn (a.s) was now the third Imam, the vicegerent of Allah on earth, in the place of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Imam Husayn (a.s) was left alone in a hostile atmosphere, where Muawiya had successfully purchased public support to execute his plan of placing Yazid on the throne of caliphate, to perpetuate the rule of the Muslim Empire in his family and thus to start the Umayyid dynasty.

As Imam Ali (a.s) had done during the reigns of the first three caliphs, and Imam Hasan (a.s) after Muawiya's usurping the power, Imam Husayn (a.s.) also following in the footsteps of his father and brother, retread into seclusion in Madina. the foot steps of his father and brother, had retired into seclusion in Madina. He had nothing to do with the politics of the state or the political affairs of the people. He was now the last of the *panjatanpak* and his main concern was supplication to the Almighty Allah and acting as the heavenly torch of the Divine Light of guidance towards Allah.

In the days of the governorship of Muawiya, Abdullah's wife Zaynab was a pious lady of noted beauty. The accounts of the beauty of the good lady had reached even Damascus. Yazid, the son of Muawiya heard it and at once his voluptuous mind

naturalized in licentiousness determined to somehow own the wife of Abdullah for his own. All possible ways and means of deceit and temptations to induce Abdullah to divorce his wife went in vain. Muawiya to please his son, thought of a very crafty device. Abdullah was at once summoned to the capital. When Abdullah came to Damascus, he was received with unusual and extraordinary honours and regards and was housed in a luxuriously furnished abode. On the third day of his arrival, Abdullah was offered to wed Muawiya's daughter, to which Abdullah resented, but the offer was also with the threat of losing his position as well as his life against his refusal. Poor Abdullah was forced to accept the offer. The next day of his acceptance, Abdullah was asked to divorce Zainab. When Abdullah had executed the divorce, the very next day after it, he was not given even an interview with Muawiya, saying that the offer to wed his daughter was only lain offer and had been withdrawn.

The letter of divorce was sent to Zaynab through a special messenger (Abu Darda) with Yazid's offer to wed her, Zaynab was then at Madina.

Allah is always there to protect the interest of the righteous ones when they are unjustly aggressed by any tyrant. Abu Darda before going to Zaynab, went to pay his regard to Imam Husayn (a.s) and intimidated to him the object of his visit to Madina. Imam Husayn (a.s) hearing the painful story, told Abu Darda to convey his own (Imam Husayn's) offer to Zaynab along with that of Yazid's. Zaynab receiving the letter of her divorce began to sob. When the offers of Yazid and Imam Husayn were conveyed to her she readily preferred the Holy Imam and got herself wedded to him.

When the disappointing story was conveyed to Muawiya and

Yazid, it enraged both the father and the son. Abdullah was dismissed and his property in Iraq and elsewhere was confiscated and he was rendered a destitute. Poor Abdullah having lost his wife, his post and all his properties, did not know what to do, and at last he walked all the way from Iraq to Madina to recover from Zaynab the money he had left with her. Reaching Madina, he went to the residence of Imam Husayn (a.s). Now Zaynab could talk to Abdullah only from behind the screen, neither he could see her nor she could look at him. Both stood quietly shedding tears, when Imam Husayn suddenly appeared and removed the screen from between them saying :-

"Abdullah God is my witness, not a glance of mine has fallen on your wife. Zaynab is still your wife as was she before, for the divorce under compulsion was no divorce and my wedding her was no wedding. I wedded her just to protect her and restore her to you and go happy."

Both Abdullah and Zaynab were stunned with tears of joy in their eyes and returned home praising Imam Husayn (a.s.) and cursing those who had wickedly devised to separate them. (Ref: The King of Martyrs By S.V. Mir Ahmed Ali).

It was in 60 A.H, that Muawiya died and the news of his death was conveyed to Walid bin Utba, the Governor of Madina on behalf of Yazid (the son of Muawiya) who had succeeded as the caliph of Damascus. As caliph, Yazid's first and only worry was to secure *bayat* (oath of loyalty) from five persons, first and foremost of whom was Imam Husayn (a.s). In order to achieve this, he sent a letter to Walid bin Utba commanding him to demand *bayat* (oath of loyalty) from Imam Husayn (a.s) and in case of his refusing to do so, to behead him and send his head to Damascus.

At this time the old and veteran member of Bani Umayya, Marwan bin Hakam was also in Madina. So when Walid sent for Imam Husayn (a.s) he also sent for Marwan for counseling at the time of meeting with Imam Husayn (a.s). Walid's messenger met Imam Husayn (a.s) in the Prophet's mosque in the night when people had left the mosque. Only Imam Husyan (a.s) and Abdullah bin Zubair were there. Upon receiving the governor's message, Abdullah bin Zubair was surprised, but Imam Husayn (a.s) knew that there would be trouble. His family wanted to accompany him, but Imam Husayn (a.s) said : "No, he has called me. I should go alone." But when Imam Husayn (a.s) went he was accompanied by his trusted companion with Hazrat Abbas Ibn Ali (a.s) as the most notable among them. Imam Husayn (a.s) went in, asking the others to wait outside and to enter only if they heard the raised voice of Walid or he himself called them in. Upon entering the Governor's house Imam Husayn (a.s) saw that both Walid and Marwan were sitting side by side. Walid read to him Yazid's letter conveying the news of Muawiya's death and placed before him the question of *bayat* (oath of loyalty) to Yazid as the new caliph. On hearing the news of Muawiya's death Imam Husayn (a.s) recited the verse from the Holy Quran:

"*Inna Lilla wa inna ilaihi rajioon*"
"Verily we are Allah's and verily to Him shall we return"

With regard to the question of *bayat* (oath of loyalty) to Yazid he replied in the following manner:

"As for *bayat* I think for a man in my position, you would not deem it enough that I offer *bayat* (oath of loyalty) in this secret manner. When you make a public announcement of Muawiya's death and invite the other Muslims to swear allegiance to Yazid,

then ask me too, so that the matter is solved once for all." (Tareekh of Tabari vol 6, P.189, Al Akhbar-ut-Tiwal P.229).

Walid was perhaps anticipating a flat refusal, and not conversation, from Imam Husayn (a.s) but when he heard this polite reply, he accepted it saying complacently:

"Quite so, you may go now only to come again with others."

At this point Marwan, who had kept silent throughout the meeting, now intervened and said to Walid:

"What! If you let Husayn go now you will never get hold of him again. Better force him to swear *bayat* (oath of loyalty) here and now or kill him."

Imam Husayn (a.s) then raised his voice and said to Marwan :

"How dare you or Walid kill me? By Allah you have uttered wrong and committed sin."

It is also related that as soon as he raised his voice, his comrades and relatives who were keeping vigil outside the gate, rushed in led with open swords by Hazrat Abbas bin Ali (a.s). However, Imam Husayn did not allow them to indulge in any act of violence and returned peacefully to his house along with all his men. (Tabbari, Vol 6, P.189).

Imam Husayn's (a.s) aim was to expose the Evil which had till now been usurping the cloak of Islam, and to draw an indelible line of demarcation between True Islam. And the "wrong" under cloak of Islam. He wanted to do it publicly and openly so that the largest number of people should get acquainted with the Truth. With this end in view he carefully avoided allegiance

to Yazid in the lonely meeting with Walid.

A detailed account of this event was conveyed to Yazid by Marwan holding Walid responsible for letting Imam Husayn (a.s) returned hope safely. Walid was soon removed from the office of governorship of Madina and was replaced by Umer bin Al-Ashdaq. This shows beyond doubt that Yazid's letter did contain the direction to kill Imam Husayn (a.s) if he refused *bayat*.

Sometimes it is argued that Imam Husayn (a.s) should not have opposed such a great power as the ruling caliph. Also, people question why did he not act as his brother, Imam Hasan did, and enter a peace treaty. At this stage the readers must know that Imam Husayn (a.s) was a peace loving man as Imam Hasan (a.s) and he was fully conscious of the dire consequences of this great decision. It was clear that the way in which Yazid had been nominated by Muawiya as caliph, his profligate character and un-Islamic habits and pursuits were an open challenge to the sanctity and inviolability of the laws, rules and practices of Islam and therefore his position as a caliph could not be acknowledged by Imam Husayn (a.s). The Imam (a.s.) must have taken stock of the preceding events and observed that:

The right and claim Imam Ali (a.s) to the caliphate was ignored but for 25 long years he kept quiet and did not take any aggressive step to secure that right.

After Imam Ali (a.s), Imam Hasan's during his *imamat*, the conditions being unfavorable, accepted the enemy's move for peace whereby he gave over the temporal authority to Muawiya, binding him to abide by certain terms in the interest of Islam.

For ten long years Imam Hasan (a.s) kept himself bound to the treaty despite the violation of some of its most important terms by Muawiya, and did not take any aggressive step to put him right or to force him to abide by those terms, till he too was martyred.

After Imam Hasan, the same policy was continued by Imam Husayn (a.s) for an entire decade and he too abided by the same peace loving practices. But, now that Yazid was demanding *bayat* (oath of loyalty) from Imam Husayn (a.s), there was no question of joining in a Peace Treaty with him. It was the question of *bayat* which is the acceptance of his sole authority in Islam, not only as a temporal ruler, but also as the head of faith which was not acceptable to the family of the Prophet. They could never hand over Islam to such a person as Yazid, who was well notorious for his profligate habits, wholesale devotion to music, wine and women in complete disregard and violation of Islamic tenets and commandments. The reason for this acute insistence by Yazid for securing Imam Husayn's (a.s) Oath of loyalty in his favour was evidently that Imam Husayn (a.s) at this juncture was the sole living representative of the Holy Prophet (a.s) and had the same responsibility as the Holy Prophet (a.s) would have had if he were living at this time for the protection, self guarding and preservation of Righteous Truth, Good and virtue which all stood embodied in the shape of Islam. Being the direct descendent of the Holy Prophet (a.s) he was deemed to carry and did actually carry all these responsibilities. Imam Husayn (a.s) was the replica of Imam Hasan (a.s), Imam Ali (a.s) and the Holy Prophet (a.s), and the *bayat* (oath of loyalty) by him implied *bayat* by Imam Hasan (a.s), by Imam Ali (a.s) and the Holy Prophet (s.a.) - an act which was not at all possible by the family of the Holy Prophet (s.a.).

Further, in the previous caliphates at the taking of oath of loyalty,

the caliphs used to affirm that they would act on Quran and *sunnah* and people swore allegiance on that firm understanding. But, during Yazid's days, the spirit of autocracy had crept in to such an extent that allegiance was sought in the words that the swearer became bound to the caliph in respect of his life and property and the caliph could deal with either in any manner he liked. Thus, according to a narration in Akhbar-ut-Tiwal P.216, Rabbea bin Aswad was killed in Madina because he declined to swear allegiance to Yazid in these words although he was prepared to swear it on the terms that the caliph would abide by the Quran and Sunnah. Now the readers should understand why Imam Husayn (a.s) did not negotiate a treaty of peace with Yazid as Imam Hasan (a.s) had done with the previous caliph Muawiya.

It is pertinent to add that several persons offered their advice to Imam Husayn (a.s) with regard to the steps to be taken by him in this matter. For example, he was advised to continue his stay in Madina. Another view was that he should make Makka his head quarter. By some people he was advised to shift himself to Ta-if or to Yemen. Some people also advised him to take refuge in Ija Mountain. However no friend, relative or well wisher of Imam Husayn (a.s) ever suggested to swear *bayat* (oath of loyalty) to Yazid, because such *bayat* clearly and definitely implied that Imam Husayn (a.s) would have traded nobility of conduct and the basic rights of the Muslims in exchange for peace and comfort of the transitory life of this world. Without doubt, Imam Husayn (a.s) could never do so. He aimed at infusing in every individual the spirit of rising against any oppressor who tramples on their rights even though he be the ruler with highest authority in the realm. It was well known that Imam Husayn (a.s) had no military power, no armed comrades, associates and no possibility of mobilization for fresh supporters who could fight the enemy from his side. The last

encounter between Muawiya and Imam Ali (a.s) was at Siffin about 23 years ago. During this span of two decades those who had fought with Imam Ali (a.s) as his supporters had all dispersed and were no more available as a regular army fit to face an enemy. Thousands of them had been purchased by rich bribes from Muawiya's side, while those who were steadfast in their adherence to Imam Ali (a.s) had been removed from the scene by the sword or gallows. Being determined not to surrender, Imam Husayn (a.s) decided to face any degree of violence that might be made to bear upon him, but in a novel way. Imam Husayn (a.s) decided to present to the world a strange mode of encounter with the adversary. He was to face violence with strength of character, authority with weakness, numerical strength with lack of it and high handedness with sufferance, nevertheless exercising the natural right of self-defence to the extent he could. This was a way of meeting the enemy which had never been witnessed anywhere in the world.

Soon after returning back from Walid's place, Imam Husayn (a.s) decided to leave Madina. The inmates of the family were informed of the decision including all the members of Bani Hashim. When Imam Husayn (a.s) was about to leave Madina he visited the tomb of the Holy Prophet (a.s) where he wept bitterly and said:

"O! Holy Prophet of Allah; May my parents be ransom for you. I am leaving your blessed neighbourhood much against my will. Pressure is being brought on me to swear *bayat* (oath of loyalty) to Yazid who is a drunkard, corrupt and debauchee. If I pay homage to Yazid it would amount to infidelity and if I desist form it I shall have to pay for it with my life. I am being forced to bid farewell to this holy tomb. O' Holy Prophet of Allah! O' my Grandfather accept my last respects."

Imam Husayn (a.s) then fell asleep momentarily and dreamt of the Holy Prophet (a.s) standing by him and greeting him,

"O' my beloved son! Your father and mother and your brother are all with me here in Paradise and we are eagerly awaiting you. Hasten to join us. Know my son, that there is for you an exalted place with the light of Allah which you cannot attain except by your martyrdom. (Abu Miknaf Page 15).

Imam Husayn (a.s) bade farewell to the tomb of his beloved mother Sayyida Fatima Zehra (s.a.). in a similar manner. He started for Makka on 28th Rajab 60 A.H. reciting the Quranic Verse. "So he went forth in fear, apprehending, and said he! "O' My Lord! Deliver me from the Unjust people." (28:21)

Imam Husayn (a.s) was accompanied by all the members of his immediate family except for one of his daughters, Fatima Sughra who was seriously ill. Learning about the decision of Imam Husayn (a.s), people in groups approached him asking the reason for his decision to leave the holy city with tears in their eyes.

While bidding farewell to his brother Muhammad Hanafia, Imam Husayn (a.s) left a testament as follows:

In the name of Allah who is the most Merciful and kind, I Husayn bin Ali (a.s) testify that Allah has no partner, that Muhammad (a.s) is his Prophet and whatever the Prophet preached was true, that Paradise and Hell exist, that the Day of judgment is inevitable and that Allah will resurrect all from their grave. I do not leave Madina with an intention to create disturbances or for any ambition or violence. I am migrating from Madina out of love for the commands of the Prophet (a.s) in order to preach and guide the people. I have been told by the

Holy Prophet Muhammad (a.s) that my end will be with death by violence (Aṣam Kufi P.558)

Muhammad Hanafia advised Imam Husayn (a.s) to take refuge in Makka and if he found that place insecure he should move down to desert or mountains and await result before taking any final action (Tabari, VI P.161)

Abdullah bin Mutee' Adi met Imam Husayn (a.s) in between Madina and Makka and advised Imam Husayn (a.s) to stay in the sanctuary of Makka and invite his *shias* living in different regions, but should under no circumstance think of going to Kufa where his father was killed and brother injured grievously (Akbar-ut Tiwal P. 410)

Imam Husayn (a.s) arrived at Makka on the night of Friday the 3rd Shaaban 60 A.H (Tabari VI P.215)

While he was reciting the Quranic verse he turned his face towards Madien, said he "May be my Lord will guide me in the right path!" (28:22). He camped in Shab-e-Ali.
(Akhbarut Tiwal P.230 Tabari IV P.223)

Yazid immediately ordered a new governor Amr bin Sayeed to be posted at Makka when he heard of Imam Husayn's (a.s) arrival there. Thus the joint charge for Makka and Madina was placed under one governor.

In the meantime, some people in Kufa who had refused *bayat* (oath of loyalty) to Yazid met in the house of Sulayman bin Surd, a companion of the Prophet (a.s) discussed with him the question of future line of action and decided that they should invite Imam Husayn (a.s) to Kufa with the offer to support him in his stand in not recognizing Yazid as caliph. (Tabari VI P.197)

They sent the following letter "In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the Merciful; addressed to Husayn bin Ali (a.s), the leader of the faithful, from Sulayman bin Surd Khuzai, Musayyab, Rifaa bin Shaddad, Habib bin Mazahir, Abdullah bin Wayil and others:-

Peace be on you. Praise be to Allah who has brought about end of the life of your violent, corrupt and oppressive enemy (Muawiya). He was one who caused confusion in the affairs of the community, stripped it of its authority, and ruled oppressively without the consent of the believers. He killed the noble people, supported the evildoers and distributed the contents of the public treasury among his own oppressive supporters.

We have no leader (Imam) except you, therefore, hasten to join us. May Allah unite us through you on Truth? Although Numan bin Bashir rules from the palace, we do not join him in the Friday or other congregational or Id prayers. If we are assured of your arrival, we shall oust him so that he shall find no place of refuge except in Damascus. Peace be on you and Allah's mercy and blessings on you, son of the Prophet (a.s) and on your father. There is no power or strength except in Almighty Allah. (Tabari P.17, Al-Imamat-was-Siyasat 11 P.3)

The letter was carried to Makka by Abdullah bin Subi Hamadani and Abdullah bin Wayil and reached Imam Husayn (a.s) on the 19th of Ramazan 60 A.H. This was followed by another set of fifty three letters written by prominent Kufi citizens within two days after the first one. These were carried to Imam Husayn (a.s) by Qais bin Mushar Saidawi, Abdur Rahman bin Abdullah bin Kadan and Amara bin Ubaid Saloobi: these letters were evidently written as a result of the General unrest and dissatisfaction over Yazid having been nominated as caliph of Islam while men of consequence of every shade of opinion

regarded him totally unfit for that great office. Said bin Abdullah Hanafi and Hani bin Hani Sabeeyee brought another letter requesting the Imam to reach there quickly as the people were anxiously waiting for him. Even after this letter one more letter was written by seven person namely.

Shis bin Rabi 2. Hijar bgin Abjar 3. Yazid bin Ruwaim 4. Uzrah bin Qais 5 Amr bin Hajjaj Zubaidi 6. Mohammed bin Umair Tamini and 7. Yazid bin Haris.

With the words "The crop is ready for harvest you are invited to an army united and ready to support you." (Tabari VI P.197, Ikhbar-ul-Tiwal P.141)

And it is significant that these were the seven prominent persons who were all present in Karbala among the enemy forces against Imam Husayn (a.s) .

Within the next few days numerous other letters arrived. Abdullah bin Zubair was a constant visitor to Imam Husayn (a.s) in Makka. He advised him not to leave the place, but Imam Husayn (a.s)'s reply was "it is better to be killed a few inches outside Makka than to be killed within this holy town." According to the Holy Prophet (a.s)'s tradition a person would be killed in Makka like a sheep and I do not want to be that person. Imam thus made no secret of his anticipation that he would be killed even if he took refuge in the snake's hole.

Imam Husayn (a.s) wrote an answer to the letters sent to him by the notables of Kufa and handed it over to Hani bin Hani and Saeed bin Abdullah Hanafi who were the last two messengers:

*"In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the compassionate.*

**From:** Al Husayn bin Ali

**To:** The leaders of the believers and the Muslims.

Hani and Saeed have brought me your letters. they are the last two of year messengers who have come to me. I have understood everything which you have described and mentioned. The (main) statement of your great men is:

"There is no Imam over us. Therefore come; through you, may God unite us under truth and guidance."

I am sending you my brother, Muslim bin Aqil, who is my cousin and my trustworthy (representative) from my House. If he writes to me that the opinion of your leaders and of the men of wisdom and merit among you is united in the same way as the messengers who have come to me have described and as I have read in your letters, I will come to you speedily, God willing. For by my life, what is the Imam except one who judges by the Book, one who upholds justice, one who professes the religion of truth, and one who dedicates himself to the essence of God. (Al-Irshad-Shaikh Mufeed)

Imam Husayn gave this letter to Hazrat Muslim bin Aqil, enjoined him to be pious before Allah, to conceal his affair and to act in a kindly way. If he saw that the people were united and had committed themselves to an agreement, he should immediately inform him.

Hazrat Muslim departed for Kufa. On the way he stopped at Madina, where he prayed in the mosque of the Holy Prophet and said farewell to his relatives. Then he took two guides from the tribe of Qais, and adopted an uncommon route, to avoid interception. The guides lost the way and got perished of thirst.

Hazrat Muslim succeeded in reaching a stream known as Maziq and also in locating the correct path. He communicated these events as an indication of a bad omen. On reading his letter Imam Husayn (a.s) replied,

"In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. From Husayn to his cousin Muslim bin Aqeel. O' cousin! I have heard my grandfather the Prophet of Allah, say: He who believes in omens or predicts them for others is not of my community. Therefore, on receipt of my letter proceed with the task which I have entrusted to you, Peace and Allah's mercy be upon you!" (Akhbar-ut-Tiwal P.232 Tabari VI P 198, Abu Miknaf P19)

On reaching Kufa Hazrat Muslim stayed in Dar Musayyab belonging to Mukhtar bin Abu Ubaida Saqafi. (Akhbar-ut-Tiwal P.232 Tabari VI P 199, VII P58)

Abis bin Abi Shabib Shakiri, Habib bin Mazahir and Sayeed bin Abdullah Hanafi took the lead in welcoming Hazrat Muslim (Tabari VI P.199) and within a week twelve to eighteen thousand citizens of Kufa promised support to Imam Husayn (a.s)'s stand (Tabari VI P 194 and 211)

Later on Hazrat Muslim bin Aqil shifted to the house of Hani bin Urwa as Mukhtar had to leave Kufa for settlement of some matters about his agricultural estate.

When Muslim bin Aqil reached Kufa and the public confirmed their support for Imam Husayn (a.s)'s stand, the spies of Yazid, reported the course of events which were taking place against him. Yazid immediately dismissed Numan bin Bashir, the Governor of Kufa in order to safeguard his own interest. (Akhbar-ut-Tiwal P.415 Urdu Trs). He then sent Ibn Ziyad (the governor of Basra) to handle the situation in his favour. Within

a day or two, almost all the leaders of the town were bribed and strong threats from Ibn Ziyad made the people of the town desert poor Muslim.

Earlier, Hazrat Muslim bin Aqeel impressed with and guided by the enthusiasm of the deceitful Kufees and not knowing what would befall him the very next day, wrote a letter to Imam Husayn (a.s.) requesting him to proceed to Kufa. It was only after the letter inviting Imam Husayn (a.s.) with a favourable report about the situation at Kufa, had already been dispatched, that Muslim learnt of the treachery of the Kufians and the turn of the tide of the situation.

In the mosque of Kufa where a large congregation had gathered to offer evening prayers, the town-crier was shouting:

"Be it known to the people of Kufa that Obaidullah, son of Ziyad, has assumed the governorship of Kufa under the order of the caliph. It is hereby proclaimed for the information of all the citizens of Kufa that any person found associating with Muslim, son of Aqeel, will be considered a rebel against the caliph and by way of punishment he will be hanged, drawn and jailed, his entire family will be put to the sword and his property confiscated. In case of those who have extended their welcome to him, if they now repent and desist from doing so, amnesty will be given."

Under the strict ordinance issued against those who gave even shelter to him, Muslim was left all alone in Kufa. None in Kufa would now even speak to Muslim and he was left homeless, wandering in the streets with everyone in town, now hostile to him.

Hani bin Urwa, the good hearted Kufi who offered hospitality

to Hazrat Muslim bin Aqeel was arrested and put in jail. These miseries did not upset Hazrat Muslim, but the one and only though that worried and grieved him was that he had written to Imam Husayn (a.s.), in favour of such a treacherous people and had invited him to come to a place where only death and destruction awaited for him. He was not allowed to leave the town, nor could he send any note to Imam Husayn (a.s.) to intimate the treacherous turn events had taken.

Surrounded by treachery and deceit on all sides, Hazrat Muslim was at last able to send his two young sons out of Kufa. He entrusted the two with a; mission of paramount importance - that of conveying a message to Imam Husayn (a.s.) advising him to change his decision to come to Kufa as it had proved to be a disloyal and cruel city. The two innocents of the House of the Holy prophet with the divine gift of bravery and courage walked through desert during nights, hungry and thirsty and yet taking care to conceal their presence from the sight of people by hiding in bushes. Being well aware of significance of the task their father had said them, there one and only concern was to reach Imam Husayn in time to caution him of the turn in events in Kufa.

Having dispatched his sons, Hazrat Muslim bin Aqil, deserted and betreat by the Kufians, was forced to wonder in the streets of Kufa. The blood thirsty troops of Ibn Ziyad was in persuit of him, when he happened to stop at the door of a house where a woman called Towa was waiting for a son. The kind woman gave him shelter and offered him water and food. Hazrat Muslim took refuge in her house for the night. However, the son of the hostess reported him to Abdal-Rehman bin Mohammed bin Ashass (police chief) the following morning. He rushed with a contingent of three hundred armed men to arrest Hazrat Muslim (akhbar-ut-Tiwal P.240 Tabari VI P.209-10)

Hazrat Muslim gave a determined battle for a considerable time and refused to surrender inspite of being very grievously wounded. He gave up fighting only when Muhammad bin Ashass promised him safety. (Tabari VI P.211)

When Hazrat Muslim was produced before Ibn Ziyad, the latter flatly refused to honour the undertaking of Muhammad bin Ashass and ordered his execution. However, he allowed Muslim to make his last will to Umar bin Saad who was present in the court of Ibn Ziyad, Hazrat Muslim desired him firstly to inform Imam Husayn (a.s) about his fate and tell him not to proceed towards Kufa Secondly to sell his armour and pay his debt of 700 dirhams in Kufa and finally to bury his dead body. Ibn Ziyad advised Umar bin Saad to abide by the first two testaments, but the governor himself would deal with the dead body, as he liked. (Tabari VI P 212)

Thereafter, Hazrat Muslim was thrown alive from the vampart of the palace and martyred. On 9th of Zilhaj 60 A.H. his dead body was beheaded and the head was forwarded to the court of Yazid along with the head of Hani Bin Urwa who was also beheaded after being taken out from the prison for having rendered assistance to Hazrat Muslim bin Aqil. (Yaqulsi 11 P.229) (Tabari VI P 213)

Yazid, while appreciating this action of Ibn Ziyad against Hazrat Muslim bin Aqil, added that he was waiting to see how he dealt with Imam Husayn (a.s). (Akhbar-Tiwal P 242) It must be borne in mind that Yazid had already ordered the governor of Madina to kill Imam Husayn (a.s) to send his severed head to the ruler's court at Damishq (Damascus).

It will be recalled that in reply to the letters of invitation received

from Kufa Imam Husayn (a.s) had promised to proceed to Kufa, once his appointed deputy, Muslim, had sent him a report concerning the state of affairs there and the loyalty of the Kufians who had shown allegiance to the Imam.

Upon receiving Hazrat Muslim's letter, brought by Aabis bin Abi Shabile Shakiri, containing the favourable conditions in Kufa, Imam Husayn decided to set out for Kufa and depart from Makka. Imam Husayn (a.s) left Makka on 8th of Zilhaj 60 A.H, not yet knowing the altered situation in Kufa and the killing of Hazrat Muslim bin Aqil Hani Bin Urwa by the Kufians. (Tabari VI P.12). It was initially not clear why Imam Husayn (a.s) was leaving Makka as to miss the Hajj by 2 days only. The reason for this was disclosed by Imam Husayn (a.s) to the poet Fazdak who met him outside Makka. Apparently Yazid had sent men in the garb of Hajis with instructions to arrest Imam Husayn (a.s) in whatever condition he might be found.

When Imam Husayn (a.s) was leaving for Iraq he gave a *Khutba* (sermon) before those with him and said:

"Death encircles the neck of the son of Adam, just as a necklace encircles the neck of a young damsel. I long to meet my ancestors as much as Yaqub longed for Yusuf I love the place where I shall be killed. It is as if I see my limbs being broken into pieces by beastly beings. There is no escape from the day of death, which stands fixed by providence. We, the members of the Holy Prophet merge our will in the will of the Almighty Allah. We put up patiently with his trials and earn reward apportioned for the patient ones. The kinsfolk of the Holy Prophet cannot be separated from him. Behold let him only who is ready to lay down his life and who has prepared himself for meeting almighty Allah, accompany me Allah willing, I shall set off tomorrow morning.

Before Imam Husayn (a.s) left Makka, many notables met with him. One of them, Abdullah Ibn Umar, advised him to stay at home to which Imam Husayn (a.s) replied, "Ibn Umar Alas these people would not let me live alone, they would continue to disturb me. Even if I go to an unknown destination, they would search me out and compel me to swear *bayat* to Yazid." Abdullah bin Abbas also met Imam Husayn (a.s) and advised him to write to the Iraqis to get rid of their enemy first and only then he should go to Iraq. Imam Husayn (a.s) replied to him that he would prefer to be killed in Iraq than being butchered in Makka. (Asam kufi: Futuh P.614)

When Abdullah bin Abbas realized that no degree of pleading would budge Imam Husayn (a.s), he requested him not to take the ladies with him as he feared that Imam Husayn (a.s) would be killed. Imam Husayn (a.s) then said:

"I have seen the Holy Prophet in a dream. He only has directed me to take all my people with me. (Tabari VI P.216-17)

There is slight difference of opinion among historians concerning the stages of halt of Imam Husayn (a.s) during his march from Makka to Karbala. His first halt was at Safah where he met Fazdaq and inquired about the state of affairs in Kufa and Fazdaq replied. "Their sympathies are with you but their sword is against you," to which Imam Husayn (a.s) replied "I will thank Allah if things turn according to my plan, otherwise I will submit to his will. It is enough as my conscience is clear. (Akhbar-ut-Tiwal P.245 Tabari VI, P.218)

The second stop was Taneim, where Imam Husayn (a.s) met Abdullah bin Jafar and Yahya bin Saeed bin Aas. Before coming himself to met Imam Husayn (a.s.), Abdullah had sent a letter

to Imam Husayn (a.s) through his sons Aun and Mohammad, wherein he beseeched the Imam (a.s) not to proceed to Iraq but to go back to Madina as he feared death for him and his family. If the Imam was no more in the world there would remain no light on the earth as he was the center of the hopes of the faithful. Delivering the letters Aun and Muhammad remained with Imam Husayn (a.s). Abdullah bin Jafar now came to Imam Husayn (a.s) with a letter from Amr bin Saeed bin Aas, governor of Madina promising safety to Imam (a.s). The governor also sent his brother Yahya with Abdullah bin Jafar along with this letter to add force to the promise of safety. Imam Husayn (a.s) did not agree with Abdullah bin Jafar and wrote a reply to the governor's letter and handed it over to Yahya. Abdullah bin Jafar, however, could not accompany the Imam (a.s) on his journey due to his old age.

From this point of his journey Imam Husayn (a.s) sent a letter to the people of Kufa through Qais bin Mushar Saidawi as follows:

"From Husayn bin Ali to brethren in Kufa. I have received Hazrat Muslim's letter indicating that you are united and agreed in my favour and looking forward to my arrival among you. You intend to support my cause. May Allah reward you and make our affairs end well. I have left Makka on the 8th Zilhaj and heading fast towards you. You should keep yourselves ready in all respects as I shall be reaching there soon."

Haseen bin Tamim was made incharge of several thousand policemen to stop men coming in and going out of Kufa. Army detachments were placed on patrol on the routes with such strict orders that Qais bin Mushar Saidawi, the messenger of Imam Husayn (a.s) was arrested by Haseen's men at Qadsia. When he was brought to the court of Ibn Ziyad in Kufa, Ibn

Ziyad ordered him to go to the pulpit and abuse Imam Husayn (a.s). Qais went to the pulpit, praised Allah and his prophet and then said "O' people! Husayn has left Hijaz and I have been sent by him to inform you. So, be prepared to receive him." Thereafter he cursed Yazid and Ibn Ziyad and praised Imam Husayn (a.s), his father Imam Ali (a.s) and the Holy Prophet. Ibn Ziyad ordered that Qais should be killed by being thrown down from the rampart of the place. He was dealt with accordingly. Imam Husayn (a.s) came to know of this tragic event at a later stage.

When Imam Husayn (a.s) reached Zurood_he learned that Zuhair Qain who was a notable of Kufa, though not fully inclined towards Imam (a.s) was camping beside the stream there, having return from Hajj. Imam Husayn (a.s) sent word to him that he wanted to meet him. At first Zuhair was not inclined to have a meeting with Imam Husayn (a.s) but when his wife taunted him that the son of the Holy Prophet (a.s) wished to honour him with his visit and it was strange that he was refusing it, he then agreed. When Imam Husayn (a.s) met him he fully explained his plans to him whereupon Zuhair Qain decided to Join Imam (a.s) and ordered his tents to be pitched along with those of Imam Husayn (a.s). He divorced his wife and allowed her to go with her brother to the parents. Then he addressed his men saying "I have decided to die with Imam Husayn (a.s). those of you who are agreeable to seek martyrdom may remain with me, while those who do not want martyrdom should leave me even from now." Accordingly all his men left him. (Tabari Vol 6 P.224). Imam Husayn's talk with Zuhair and the latters speech before his men show beyond doubt that Imam (a.s) was not proceeding towards Kufa under any false hopes or misunderstandings. He was surely working on a set plan wherein he was sure of securing martyrdom.

It was then at the place known as Salabiya that two Kufi persons, who had joined Imam Husayn's (a.s) group on coming back from Hajj disclosed the news of Hazrat Muslim bin Aqil and Hani bin Urwa being killed and that they had seen their dead bodies being dragged through the streets. It was sorrowful news for the Imam but he controlled himself with extreme composure of mind and said "*Inna lillahi wa inna illaihi rajioon*" and kept quiet (Al Akhbarut-Tiwal P.246)

These two men, namely Abdullah bin Salim and Muzri bin Mushmail, advised Imam Husayn (a.s) that nobody in Kufa would support him and they were apprehensive about Imam Husayn's journey to Kufa and requested him not to expose his family to danger.

Imam Husayn (a.s), who appeared to be taking every step after having carefully weighed all the pros and cons of his great move, did not give any reply but turned towards Hazrat Muslim bin Aqil's brothers and sought their opinion. They were unanimous in their reply and said "By Allah we would not get back unless we avenge Muslim's blood or get killed." Then turning to the two persons Imam said "Why should I then live without them?" the march was then resumed, after taking necessary reserves of water as directed by Imam Husayn (a.s)

At Zubala the messenger of Muhammad bin Ashas, the police chief of Kufa delivered the last will of Hazrat Muslim bin Aqil requesting Imam Husayn (a.s) not to go Kufa. The messenger also gave the news of the sad fate of Qais bin Mushar.

Imam Husayn (a.s) then addressed the people accompanying him:

"We have learnt with sorrow that Muslim bin Aqil and Hani bin

Urwa have been killed and our supporters have forsaken us. Therefore those of you who would prefer to leave us, may leave freely without guilt.

The people began to disperse from him until finally there were left with him only those followers who had come with him from Madina, and a small group of those who had joined him at latter stages during the journey. Imam Husayn (a.s) realized that the Arabs had followed him under the impression that he was going to a land where the inhabitants' obedience to him had already been established. Imam Husayn (a.s.) did not want them to accompany him without being fully aware of the true states of affairs that awaited them in Kufa.

When Imam Husayn (a.s) reached Batn Aqiq, he met Amr bin Fauzan who clearly told him that Ibn Ziyad's army had banned and closed all routes between Qadsia and Azeeb. Amr discouraged Imam Husayn (a.s) from proceeding further. Imam thanked him for his advice, but continued onward, making a small diversion, to avoid Qadsia, and halted for the night at Sarat (Akhbar-ut-Tiwal P.247)

From Sarat, Imam Husayn (a.s.) proceeded to Sharaf where he ordered that as much water should be carried as the containers permitted. (Tabari Vol 6 P.227 Al-Irshad P.223)

In the meantime the new moon had appeared and the month of Muharram had commenced. Having covered a little distance, a number of cavalry men the Imam's men noticed approaching. Imam Husayn (a.s) inquired whether there was a suitable hillock from where they could face the approaching cavalrymen. Zuhair advised him to march upto the hills of Zulhasam which was on their left, so as to face the enemy, keeping the Zulhasam behind them. Imam Husayn (a.s) acted accordingly. It was then learnt

that it was a contingent of one thousand cavalry men headed by Hur bin Yazid Riyahee. This place was three miles from Qadisa. (Tabari Vol IV P.232) Since Imam (a.s) had avoided the main route through Qadsia, he had escaped interception by Haseen bin Nameer's men, whereupon Haseen dispatched Hur to intercept Imam Husayn (a.s). When Hur and his soldiers reached Zulhasam, They were completely exhausted by heat and thirst. Seeing their pitiable conditions, Imam Husayn (a.s) ordered his men to take out the water which had been stocked at Sharaf and give it to the soldiers and animals of the enemy to quenched their thirst. He personally supervised the distribution of water supply to ensure that no one was left thirsty. This unexpected hospitality stunned Hur and his soldiers, who sat down to take rest there.

Imam Husayn (a.s) led the *Zuhr* prayer and even Hur and his soldiers offered prayer behind him (Akhbar-ul-Tiwal P.247 Tabri VI P.228). After finishing the prayer Imam Husayn (a.s) turned to Hur and his soldiers and said: "I clarify my position before Allah in your presence. I did not come to this side until you wrote me letters indicating that you had no Imam and Allah may guide you through me. If you still feel like that I will stick to my programme otherwise if you do not like my coming I will go back." There was no reaction from the audience. The Imam (a.s) came out for *Asr* prayer and both the parties offered prayer together as before. After *Asr* prayer he delivered the following sermon:

"If you are pious and recognize the right of the rightful, then you should please Allah. We *Ahl ul Bayt* are more entitled to authority over Muslims than those who oppress Muslims and make wrongful claims. If you do not like me and do not recognize my right, and do not stick to the opinion you expressed in your letters, and through your messengers, then I am prepared to go

back. This time Hur broke the silence and replied. "I do not know to which letters you are referring." Imam Husayn (a.s) called upon his attendant Aqba bin Samaan to bring out the two bags of the letters and placed them for inspection. Hur then remarked. "We are not among the writers of these letters. We are commissioned to follow you till we take you to Ibn Ziyad." Imam Husayn (a.s) replied "You will find your death easier than that. Then he ordered his followers to mount their horses and depart by the route they had come. When they set out to leave, the horsemen of Hur intercepted them. When Imam Husayn turned his horse towards Hijaz, Hur tried to stop him.

"May God deprive your mother of you," said, Imam Husayn (a.s) to Hur "What do you want? "If any of the Arabs other than you were to say that to me", retorted Hur, "even though he were in the same situation as you, I would not leave him without mentioning his mother being deprived (of him) whoever he might be. But by God there is no way for me to mention your mother (Sayyida Fatima) except by saying the best things possible."

Hur then said, "I have not been ordered to fight with you. I have to follow you till you reach Kufa. If you do not want to go to Kufa then I suggest you to go towards a station which is neither Kufa nor Madina." Imam Husayn (a.s) accepted it as a fair proposal and he turned to the left of the road which ran between Qadsia and Azib. Azib was only forty miles from there. (Akhbar-ut-Tiwal P.244-284. Tabari VI P.228-29)

Hur marched behind the caravan of Imam Husayn (a.s), remaining only an arrow's throw apart. While marching like this Hur conversed with Imam Husayn (a.s) and said "I appeal to you in the name of Allah to avoid battle because you are bound to be killed." Imam Husayn (a.s) replied, "Do you think

I am afraid of death? You can not do anything more than killing me. I will not budge an inch from my determination. There is no disgrace for a bold man in facing death when his conscience is clear and he fights for truth. (Tabri VI P.229)

Upon hearing this, Hur drew away from Imam. He and his followers travelled on one side while Imam Husayn (a.s) travelled on the other, until they reached Azeebul Hijanat. Imam Husayn (a.s), on reaching Qasr Bani Maqatil, stopped and a large tent was erected. Hur's contingent of soldiers also camped there, and when Imam Husayn and his men moved out of this place Hur bin Yazid also followed him.

Imam Husayn (a.s) had not covered much distance from this place when he felt drowsy on his horse back and dreamt. "People are going on road while death is following them." He woke up and recited "*Inna lillahi wa Inna illaihi rajioon.*" On the inquiry of his son Ali Akbar as to why he recited this verse at that moment, he narrated the dream. Ali Akbar then asked him. "Are we not on truth?" Imam Husayn (a.s) replied, "Yes certainly we are on truth". Ali Akbar then added, "What then do we care for?" Imam Husayn (a.s) invoked Allah's blessing for Ali Akbar saying:

"Allah may grant the best reward a father can wish for his son." The journey was continued.

Imam Husayn (a.s) and his companions continued their journey until they reached Karbala where the Imam's horse suddenly stopped in his tracks and refused to go on. He changed seven horses but not even one would proceed. Imam Husayn (a.s) then asked the people there, the name of the land. They replied, "Nenawa". The Imam again questioned if it had another name and they answered "Shatt-al-furat". He asked yet again if it

was known by any other name and they replied "Karbala". At this Imam (a.s) sighed deeply and said "This is undoubtedly the land of sorrows and miseries."

It has been related that, when Prophet Adam (a.s) descended on earth, he could not find Eve, so he started looking for her in every direction. During his search, he passed through Karbala and felt very depressed. He stumbled upon the place, on which Imam Husayn (a.s) was destined to be killed, injuring his legs, till blood ran out from them. So he raised his head towards heaven and said "O Lord! Have I committed yet another sin, so that I am again punished? It was revealed to him,

"O Adam you have not committed a sin, but this is the place in which, Husayn (a.s.) your son, will be killed with tyranny and unprecedented cruelty. It was this, that made your blood run."

It has been recorded that Prophet Nuh's Ark, while drifting around the world passed over Karbala and there it lost its balance much so that Nuh feared it might sink.

There upon he prayed to his Lord "O my Lord, I have been drifting over all parts of the earth, yet have not encountered with such an affliction as this." So Jibrail descended to him and prophesied, "O Nuh, this is the place where Husayn, the Grandson of the last of the Prophet, shall be killed." Nuh asked, "Who shall kill him, O Jibrail?" Jibrail replied. "His killer will be the one cursed by the creatures of the whole universe (on hearing this) Nuh too, cursed the killer of Imam Husayn (a.s) four times. Then the ark set on its course again till it arrived at Mount Judi and rested there.

And HazratIbrahim also, it has been related, passed through Karbala. His horse stumbled there and he fell down, injuring his head which started bleeding. Instantly he began praying,

"O my lord, what sin have I committed.?" 'O Ibrahim! You have committed no sin, but this is the place on which the grandson of the Seal of the Prophets (Mohammed) will be killed. And this injury which you have suffered, is a reminder of his." Jibrail answered Prophet Ibrahim asked, "Who shall kill him O Jibrail?" Jibrail answered, "The one who has been destined to be accursed by the whole universe." Thereupon Prophet Ibrahim raised his hands and cursed Yazid. (Al-Bihar Vol 10 P.156)

It has been stated that one day Prophet Musa accompanied Yusha bin Nun, happened to pass Karbala. His shoes were torn off and his feet were injured by desert stones and started bleeding. Musa wondered what fault he had committed that he was being punished by such an injury? God sent the words for him "O! Musa. Here, Husayn shall be killed and his blood shed." "Who will be this Husayn?" asked Prophet Musa. "The grandson of Muhammad, the Last Prophet, and the son of Ali, the selected." Musa was told. Who will kill him Prophet Musa asked. "The one cursed by inhabitants of seas, land and air," came the reply. Then raising his hands, Prophet Musa deplored Yazid and Yusha Bin Nun joined him in this action.

It is related that one day Prophet Sulayman on his flying carpet happened to pass over Karbala. There he met with violent wind, which shook the carpet, and Prophet Sulayman feared a fall. When the wind subsided and the carpet landed on Karbala, Prophet Sulayman addressed the wind, "What made you subside?" The wind replied "This is the place wherein Husayn shall be killed." Prophet Sulayman inquired "And who shall be this Husayn?" the grandson of Muhammad, the Prophet and the son of Ali," was the reply. Prophet Sulayman asked as to who would be the killer and was told that Yazid, the accursed of the whole universe. Then Prophet Sulayman raised his hands and execrated Yazid. (Al-Bihar Vol 10 P.156)

It has been taken from Salman Farsi, in his book, Mowaddat-al-Qurba, that he said, "Once I visited the Prophet and saw Husayn (a.s) sitting upon his knees. The Prophet was kissing him on his cheeks and lips and stating "(O my son) you yourself are the leader (of my people) and are also the son and brother of the leaders you yourself are Imam, and your father and brother are Imams as well. You yourself are the final authority (in my religion) and so are your father, brother and mine sons, the last of whom will be preserved in God's. pleasure." (Yanabi-al-Mowaddat P.168)

It has been mentioned in Swaayeke-e-Mohreqa P.190 that once the Holy Prophet told Hazrat Ayisha, that it was Jibrail who came to him and gave him the news of Imam Husayn's (a.s) martyrdom and showed him the earth on which he shall be killed. The sand of Karbala is therefore held as *Khake-Shifa* as it was Imam Husayn's martyrdom which made the land of Karbala the most blessed one on earth.

Upon arriving at Naynawa, Hur received a message from Ibn Ziyad, directing him to stop Imam Husayn (a.s.) from proceeding any further. Also, Hur was to force him to camp at a grassless and shadeless site, divide of any defensive position. The messenger had been commanded to report how far Ibn Ziyad's order had been carried out. Hur publicly disclosed the contents of the letter and demanded that Imam Husayn (a.s) halt forthwith. Imam proposed that he should be allowed to camp a little ahead, but Hur did not agree. This created a stir among the companions of Imam Husayn (a.s) who sought his permission to fight. But Imam Husayn (a.s) declined the suggestion and remarked, "I do not want to initiate the battle." (Akhbar-ut-Tiwal P.250 Tabari Vol VI P.232)

They moved a little further but the soldiers under Hur's

command obstructed Imam Husayn (a.s)'s movement and demanded his disarmament. Imam Husayn (a.s) dismounted the horse and said that he had passed by this very village in the company of his father Imam Ali. Imam Ali (a.s) had then informed him that on this spot he would be forced to camp and that his blood would be shed here. It was Thursday the 2nd of Muharram 61 A.H (Tabari, VI P.232)

Umar bin Saad with his army of four thousand soldiers reached Karbala on the 3rd of Muharram. The combined forces of Hur and Umar bin Saad now numbered five thousand. For an armed conflict with Imam Husayn and his small party this combined force should have been sufficient. It is evident that Ibn Ziyad was so overawed by Imam Husayn (a.s)'s bravery and swordsmanship and was instinctively aware of the strength of truth that wholly lay on the Imam's side, that he regarded his force to be insufficient to deal with him. Accordingly, he ordered Haseen bin Tameem, who was in charge of patrol duty in the city of Kufa, to move his force of three thousand strongmen to Karbala. In addition, war veterans like Shis bin Rabi, Amr bin Hajjaj, Hajr bin Abjar were directed to raise their own volunteers and to proceed to Karbala. Thereafter, general mobilization of all adult male population of Kufa capable of bearing arms was ordered, and large numbers of armed men were dispatched to Karbala under various commanders. Those who did not agree with Ibn Ziyad were arrested and thrown in jail or executed.

It is noteworthy that dispite these restrictions, a handful of loyal and brave admirers of *Ah lul Bayt* managed to escape and join Imam Husayn (a.s) at Karbala. They included:

1. Burair bin Khazir Hamadani
2. Habin bin Mazhahir Asadi
3. Abdullah bin Umair Kalbi and his wife

4. Sayeed bin Abdullah Hanafi
5. Amar bin Qaraza
6. Muslim bin Awsaja Asadi
7. Jabal bin Ali Shaibani
8. Shahib bin Abdullah
9. Safi Bin Haris bin Sari
10. Malik bin Abu bin Sari
11. Abdur Rahman bin Abdullah Arji
12. Qasit bin Zuhair Taghabi
13. Maqsat bin Zuhair Taglabi
14. Kardus bin Zuhair Taghlabi
15. Kanana bin Atiq Taghlabi
16. Muslim bin Kasir Azadi
17. His slave Rafe
18. Naim bin Ajlara Ansari
19. Abdur Rahman bin Urwa
20. Abdullah bin Urwa Ghifari
21. Salim bin Amr Kalbi
22. Amr bin Jumdab Hazrami
23. Amr bin Abi Salma
24. Mani bin Ziad
25. Iram bin Kaab Ashjain
26. Hubab bin Haris
27. Malik bin Abd Hamdani
28. Saif bin Hari Hamdani
29. His slave Shabib
30. Ziad bin Arib Hamdani
31. Yazid bin Maghgal Jaafi
32. Suwaid bin Amr al Khasair

All those who had accompanied Imam Husayn (a.s), or had joined him after his arrival in Karbala, were men of high standing and position. There were 8 eminent companions of the Holy Prophet such as Muslim bin Ausaja, Zahir bin Amr

Aslami Kindi, Habib Ibn Mazahir and Sabeeb bin Abdullah. More than 20 of them were companions of Imam Ali (a.s) who had participated in the battles of Jamal, Siffeen or Nahrwan or held positions of state under him. All of them were staunch followers of Sawm (fasting) and Salat (prayer) and renown for their high calibre of piety.

Originally, Umar bin Saad was conscious of the exalted position of Imam Husayn (a.s) in Islam, and wanted to avoid killing him. But, his greed for rule over Ria had forced him to pledge allegiance to Ibn Ziyad and come to Karbala as the head of the forces arrayed against Imam Husayn (a.s). Even after arrival in Karbala, he tried to settle matters amicably so as to avoid killing Imam Husayn (a.s). He first selected one Azra bin Qais Ahmasi to meet Imam Husayn (a.s) for this purpose, but Azra declined to do so on the grounds that he had been among those who had written letters to Imam Husayn (a.s) inviting him to Kufa. Then Umar bin Saad delegated Qura bin Qais Hamzali to go to the Imam and inquired from him his reasons for leaving Makka. The Imam's companion Habib Ibn Mazahir knew him well and therefore he was allowed to meet with the Imam. As ordered by Umar bin Saad, he inquired from Imam Husayn (a.s) why he had come.. Imam replied: "People of your city wrote me to come. If they disapprove of my coming I shall go back. The reply being clear and in accordance with the purpose of avoiding war, the messenger took it back to his master. Umar bin Saad wrote this reply to Ibn Ziyad at Kufa. On reading Umar Saad's letter Ibn Ziyad recited a couplet meaning. Now he is in our clutches. How can he think of getting out? He wrote to Umar bin Saad in reply: "You should place before Husayn the demand that he and his men should swear *bayat* to Yazid and thereafter we shall see what to do."

This reply obliterated all hopes and the possibility of an amicable

settlement. Umar bin Saad sent the letter to Imam Husayn (a.s) who remarked. "It can never happen. The worst of it would be death, which I am ready to welcome heartily."

It was at this time that two more loyal supporters of Imam Husayn (a.s)'s managed to join his party.

Imam Husayn's rigid adherance to truth and righteousness was correctly observed as a sign of innocence by some conscientious soldiers under Umar's command. These brave soldiers, though fully aware of the dare consequences of such a change in allegiance, choose to die in honour and attain heavenly glory rather than to succumb to worldly pleasure.

Imam Husayn himself later on had a meeting with Umar bin Saad in the night at a spot midway between the camps of the two parties.

Ibn Ziyad sent his second directive to Umar bin Saad through Shimr (an army commander in the court of Ibn Ziyad), warning him that if Imam Husayn (a.s) managed to escape without surrendering himself, he would secured all the prestige and power, while the Ummayad rulers would have only humiliation as their lot. He wrote to Umar bin Saad:

"Prevent Husayn and his followers from getting water. Do not let them taste a drop of it." It was the second of Muharram. Umar bin Saad sent Amr bin Hajjaj with five hundred horsemen to occupy the path to the water in order to prevent Imam Husayn (a.s) and his followers from drawing even a drop of water from it. This was three days before the battle against Imam Husayn (a.s). Ibn Ziyad then wrote a letter to Umar bin Saad saying:

"You have not been appointed to show consideration to Husayn and make recommendations in his favour. If Husayn (a.s) and his followers submit and surrender to me without any condition then forward them to me and if they decline to do so attack them, frothwith, kill Husayn, dismember his limbs as he deserves it. After Husayn is killed, his dead body be trampled and overrun by horses as he is a rebel. You will receive suitable reward for this service. If you do not like to carryout these instructions step aside and hand over the charge to Shimr who has been authorized to assume charge of the command and he will not only attack Husayn (a.s) but also send me your head after executing you." After delivering the letter Shimr asked Umar bin Saad, as to what he proposed to do. "I will accomplish the campaign myself. You should work as officer in charge of infantry." He replied. (Akhbar-ul-Tiwal P.253, Tabari VI P.236)

It was on Thursday the afternoon of 9th Muharram when Umar bin Saad prepared to do battle with Imam Husayn (a.s). Imam Husayn (a.s) was informed of the advancing soldiers by his sister Sayyida Zaynab (a.s). Imam Husayn (a.s) told her that he had just dreamt his grandfather, the Holy Prophet who had told him of an early meeting between them. This upset Sayyida Zaynab (s.a.) Imam Husayn (a.s.) while consoling her called upon his brother Hazrat Abbas (a.s.) to go forward and inquire about the intentions of the advancing soldiers.

The soldiers informed Hazrat Abbas (a.s) that Ibn Ziyad had asked for their unconditional surrender or immediate battle. Upon being appraised of the situation by his brother Imam Husayn (a.s.) requested him to see if respite for one night could be obtained so that they could offer prayers and seek forgiveness of Allah. Hazrat Abbas contacted Umar bin Saad, who asked for the opinion of Shimr who replied that as officer he should himself decide. Amar bin Hajjaj and Qais bin Ashaas advised

Umar bin Saad to grant time as such a request could not be refused by the Dailani or Turk slaws. The messenger while delivering the decision about respite for the night also informed Imam Husayn (a.s) that the following morning was the final day for the battle if he did not like to surrender along with his men. (Tabari VI P.238)

Imam Husayn's (a.s) purpose in asking for this time was two-fold. Apart from being able to spend this night in devotion and praying to Allah, it would give another opportunity to his men to assess the extent of their loyalty to the Imam (a.s.) and whether they would be able to sacrifice their lives for him. If unable to take such a decisive step, they would still be able to leave under the cover of night and not suffer from any embarrassment or shame.

When it was finally known that the battle had been put off for the night Imam Husayn (a.s) gathered his companions and addressed them thus:

"I praise Allah with the highest praise and recount his glories in time of stress and calm. O believers, I do not know of any one who had followers as patient and as devoted as you are or of any family more faithful and exalted as mine. May Allah give you the recompense that I owe you. I consider that this is the final day when I shall have to encounter the army of the tyrant. Therefore, I permit you to leave me and relieve you of all the obligations of your allegiance to me. The curtain of night now encompasses us; so each of you, taking one of the members of my family by the hand, should leave me and dispense in different directions in this wilderness. I have trust in Allah who shall ward of all evils from you and from me. This army is after my life only land has no issue with you."

On hearing these words of Imam Husayn (a.s), first of all his brother Hazrat Abbas rose to speak on behalf of the relatives and said "Why should we do so? Only to survive after you. By Allah we may not live to see such an evil day." Imam Husayn (a.s)'s nephews and sons of Abdullah bin Jafar replied, "Never shall we desert you, O our master. God forbid that we should see any unpleasant or evil thing done to you." Then came the turn of the companions. Among them Muslim bin Ausaja said: "We can never leave you alone. By Allah I shall fight these enemies with my spear till it gets broken in their chests and with my sword so long as I am able to hold it. In any case I shall never leave you. If I shall have no weapons I shall hit the enemy with stones and continue fighting to protect you till I lay my life for you."

Muslim bin Ausaja was followed by Saeed bin Abdullah who said: "By Allah we will not leave till we have proved that we have discharged our obligations to the Holy Prophet (a.s) for protecting you in his obsence. By Allah if I am told that I would be killed and then revived and killed again and them burnt in flames and ashes flown in the air and this process is repeated to me seventy times, even then I shall not leave you till I finally lay my life at your feet. Whereas now it is only one death where after there is eternal honour for me."

After him Zuhair bin Qain spoke saying: "By Allah, I wish I may be killed and revived and killed a thousand times but in return you and your people remain safe." Similar feelings were expressed by others and all where unanimous in declaring that they would never leave Imam Husayn (a.s) alone at this critical hour and would gladly lay down their lives for his cause.
This was Imam Husayn (a.s)'s practical demonstration of what is most sublime in human conduct and which was never seen in the world before or after this event.

Another objective of Imam Husayn (a.s) in seeking time to put off fighting for one night was also to allow time to the men in the enemy ranks to take stock of their conscience and to examine whether it was right and proper to fight Imam Husayn (a.s). Such examination of one's soul did prove effective in the notable case of Hur bin Yazid Riyahee who was responsible for bringing Imam Husayn (a.s) and his soldiers to Karbala. Hur pondered over the plight of Imam Husayn (a.s.) and recalled the nobility of Imam's generous act of granting water to his troops and animals when they had been exhausted by thirst and hunger. Hur having spent the whole night pacing back and forth, approached his nephew and remarked "Do you see Imam Husayn (a.s), asking for help with no response from any of us and we have blocked his way. Come and let us join him and take the right path, because the world is transitory. In this way we may be able to achieve the honour of martyrdom and the everlasting blessings. But the nephew did not seem inclined. So Hur, still in an agony of profound anxiety, approached his son and repeated his suggestions. His son accepted the proposition whole heartedly. The two spurred their horses and went to Imam Husayn's (a.s) tent. Then they dismounted and bowing took Imam Husayn's, hands and kissed them. Hur, over come by the grief of his repentance, let loose his tears. Imam Husayn said to him, "Raise your head, O worthy gentleman." Hur replied "O my Lord, I am the very person who had blocked your way and forced you to come to this place, verily I had no idea of what was to happen. I have come to you as a true and sincere repentant. O'my Imam, your Divine Right commands me to sacrifice my life in your defence, which is the least that I can do in recompense. Here I am beseeching your approval. Will my repentance be accepted?" Imam Husayn said, "If you are a true repentant, certainly Allah will forgive you and verily He is the best Forgiver." Hur, his son and his slave joined Imam Husayn's (a.s) army thus saving themselves from eternal

damnation at the eleventh hour.

Imam Husayn and his companion passed the night of Ashura (the night preceding the 10th day of Muharram) in prayers till the dawn of the fateful day of sAshoora appeared. According to some historians Imam Husayn (a.s) asked his son Ali Akbar (a.s), who closely resembled the Holy Prophet in voice and stride, to pray Azaan for the *Fajr salat*. Imam Husayn (a.s) then offered the *salat* with his relatives and companions. After the prayer, he wore the armour and "Sahab", the turban of the Prophet, hung the "Zulfiqar", the sword of his father, on his waist and approaching the army of Yazid said, "O people! Take heed, the world has no permanence and must one day perish. The world is nothing but a place of humiliation and destruction and the fates of its inhabitants suffer many changes. Oh people! Though you are aware of the fundamentals of Islam and have read the Quran yourselves and though you acknowledge the Prophet Muhammad to be the messenger of God, yet you have assembled here to kill his son mercilessly. O people! Can you not see the water of the river Euphrates as it flows its winding course like a moving snake; people of all religions and even the dogs and pigs are drinking of its water while the family members of the Prophet perish of thirst." (Abu Miknaf P.60)

In the meantime, the army in the enemy camp became ready for the battle. Umar bin Saad placed Amr bin Hajjaj on the right flank (Maimama), Shimr Ziljoshan on the left flank (maisara) Azra bin Qais at the head of the cawalry and Shis bin Rabi on the head of the infantry.

Imam Husayn's (a.s.) camp consisting of thirty two horse men and forty infantry took up defensive positions. Imam Husayn (a.s) placed Zuhair bin Qain on the right flank *(maimama)*, Habib Mazahir on the left flank *(maisara)* and

Hazrat Abbas bin Ali at the center as standard-bearer of his small army of holy warriors.

After arranging his small army, thus Imam Husayn (a.s) raised his hands in prayer to Allah and said: "My Allah! You are my Guide in my hopes and support in my difficulties; I place reliance on you in all my troubles and projects. There are calamities when hearts betray weaknesses, all exits to safety get blocked, friends desert and enemies taunt. I submit to you and represent you as I know none except you whom I should represent. I bound none except you to whom I can approach for lightening my burdens and sufferings. You are the source of all bounties, center of mercy and ultimate refuge of all the objects. (Tabri VI P.241)

There was a pause for considerable time after the two unequal sides had arranged themselves opposite each other. Imam Husayn (a.s) took this opportunity to send for his she-camel and mounted it. A copy of the Quran was place in front of him. Thus he addressed the enemy ranks in these words: "O people realize and assess who I am and to which family I belong; then ponder whether my killing be warranted in any way when I am the son of the Prophet's daughter Fatima and the son of the Prophet's successor Ali who was the first believer in Allah and his Prophet and the revelations received. Was not Hamza, the leaders of the martyrs, my father's uncle? Was not Jafar who has been gifted with wings in Heaven, my uncle? Have you not heard that saying of my grandfather, the Holy Prophet in respect of my brother Hassan and myself, "These two Hasan and Husayn shall be the leaders of the youths of Paradise." Did not the prophet say "I have two weighty and valuable things behind, of which one is the Quran and the other is my *Ahl ul Bayt*." If you do not believe me, while this is the truth, then verify my words from Jabir Bin Abdullah Ansari, Abu Saeed

Khudari, Sahl bin Sayedi, Zaid bin Arqam and Anas bin Malik. All of them have heard this particular saying of the Prophet regarding my brother and myself. Do you not find anything in these sayings of the Prophet to withhold you from my bloodshed?" (Al-Bihar Vol. 10 Pg. 193)

Thereafter, Shimr interrupted shouting that he did not follow what Imam Husayn (a.s) was speaking. Habib bin Mazahir silenced Shimr by retorting, "Allah has sealed your heart." Imam Husayn (a.s) thereafter resumed his speech. "If you doubt this tradition of the Holy Prophet (a.s) then tell me if you can find today any other grandson of your Prophet other than myself in the whole universe. Tell me why you are bent on killing me. Do you want to retaliate for any murder committed by me or you demand any property grabbed by me. Do you want to take revenge for any injury caused by me to anybody?" There was complete silence and nobody opened his lips. (Tabari VI P. 243)

Then Imam Husayn (a.s) called by name, the officers among the enemy lines-Shis bin Rabi, Hajar bin Abjar, Qais bin Ashaas, Yazid bin Haris and questioned them whether they had not written letters inviting him to come in these words:-

"The harvest is ready, streams are overflowing, come as the army is ready to assist you." This direct address of Imam (a.s) put them to much embarrassment as they could not deny the fact. On the other hand they had written letters only to safeguard their position in case the Imam was to come and overthrow the Ummayid rule in Kufa. Now their dual game was exposed. In order to save themselves from disloyalty to Yazid, they replied.

"No we did not write any such letters." Imam Husayn remarked. "You certainly did write and even if you did not write then allow

me to go back if you do not like my presence and permit me to proceed to a place where I could lead a peaceful life." (Tabari VI P.243)

Having finished his duty to exhaust his pleas before the enemy Imam Husayn (a.s) got down from the she-camel and asked Aqsa bin Saman to tie it down.

Then Zubair bin Qaim approached the ranks of the enemy and called out in a loud voice:-

"O people! It is the duty of one Muslim to another that he should advise him. We belong to the same religion. We are now being listed by Allah in respect of the family of the Prophet to see how we act towards them. I summon you for help and to denonce the arrogant." We shall not rest until we kill your leader and his followers unless they yield to Yazid."

He continued "O creatures of Allah, the world is a place of decadence and destruction and its inhabitants are subject to changing conditions. Whoever is lured by worldly attraction and inclined towards them has been deceived. Imam Husayn (a.s) is more worthy of being given assistance and kindness them Bin Ziyad, the son of a loose charactered woman." (Abu Miknaf P.52)

When the sun had risen fairly high Umar bin Saad called his slave Duraid bearing his standard to stand by his side, and then he himself shot an arrow towards Imam Husayn (a.s) saying:- "Witness the first arrow shot in the battle towards Husayn (a.s) is by me." Thereafter others from his side followed suit and in a few minutes thousands of arrows were shot at Imam Husayn's (a.s) army.

Imam Husayn reacted by announcing to his companions, 'Rise to welcome death, Allah may bless you. These arrows speak of the commencement of the battle."

First of all Yasar and Salim the two slaves of Ibn Ziyad, emerged from the enemy lines and threw challenge for individual combat. Abdullah bin Umair Kalbi was permitted by Imam Husayn (a.s) to accept the challenge. He was a citizen of Kufa having a brilliant record of experience in fighting. Abdullah succeeded in killing both Salim and Yasar but lost his fingers because of a blow from Salim's sword.

Hur now sought permission from Imam Husayn (a.s) to advance and meet the challenge of the enemy for individual combat. He was reciting "I am Hur who is keen to prove his hospitality to his guest. I will hit my sword on your neck without any hesitation on behalf of this Imam who is the best citizen of Mecca." A few hours before Yazid bin Sufian Tamimi in Umar bin Saad's camp had bragged that he would have beheaded Hur if he had known of his desertion. But Yazid bin Sufian Tamimi lost his life within a moment of his appearance before Hur. This astounded the entire army and thereafter individual horsemen and combatants did not dare to face Hur.

After the combat Hur found his horse bleeding so he returned to Imam Husayn's (a.s) camp. Thereafter Nafey bin Hilal, a companion of Imam Husayn (a.s), rushed for individual combat. He asserted publicly that he belonged to Ali's (a.s) following. This statement excited Muzahim bin Harees, a horseman of Umar bin Saad, who came out for individual combat but was soon killed. After seeing this quick end of his horseman Umar bin Saad proclaimed a ban on individual combats, while Amr bin Hajjaj ordered attack on the front guards of Imam Husayn (a.s) from the direction of the river Euphrates.

The cavalry attack of Amr bin Hajjaj was successfully repulsed by Imam Husayn's men, but in this great encounter Muslim bin Ausaja paid the price with his life. It is reported that Habib bin Mazahir rushed to him and asked him to make his last will just before his death. Muslim, forgetting his own family members who were there in the camp of Imam Husayn (a.s), said:-

"I want you to take care of this Imam." Saying this the sacred soul of the great hero departed. Muslim bin Ausaja was a well known traditionist and companion of the Prophet (a.s) and was noted for his piety and prayers. When the soldiers in Umar bin Saad's camp celebrated the death of Muslim bin Ausaja, even Shis bin Rabi, the head of the enemy infantry and a commander in the enemy camp, snubbed them and paid tribute to him in these words:-

"Do not rejoice at the death of Muslim. I had seen his unique services to Islam in the conquest of Azarbaijan when he demoralized the non-muslim by killing their six men all at once before the main Muslim army could actually attack them.
(Tabari VI P.44)

It is an undeniable historic truth that the kind of faithful companions Imam Husayn (a.s) had gathered around him was not given to any of the prophets, including the Holy Prophet Muhammad (a.s). To claim such a band of men of spotless and godly character is a testament to the justness of the cause and personality of the infallible Imam himself. Brief notes on some of those martyred in Karbala and Kufa is given at the back of (King of the Martyrs).

The Imam's companions (*Ansars*) having aii laid down their lives to uphold his cause, it was now the turn of his kinsmen to prove their mettle. Imam Husayn's (a.s) sister, Sayyida Zainab,

called her two young sons, Aun and Muhammad, aged 10 and 9 years respectively and asked them:-

"What! Death has come to so many of the Holy Imam's devotees and you are still alive?"

The children submitted:-

"Dear mother! We are only waiting for Imam's permission; get it for us now, our mother! And then see what these two slaves of yours would do." Sayyida Zainab immediately sent for her brother and implored that her two sons be permitted to go into the battle- field. Imam Husayn (a.s) looked at Zainab and then to her sons. With his head bent, he replied "Zainab; my dearest sister, I find it impossible to deny your first and last request, though my granting it makes my heart sink within me." Turning to Aun and Muhammad he said: "My dear children, go forward and fulfill your heart's desire to die like heroes. I shall soon be joining you on your journey to eternity." When these two boys ventured into the battle- field, one fought like Imam Ali (a.s) and the other like Jaffar. Sayyida Zainab had asked them not to go near the water, so they kept-their backs to the river throughout the fight. When the news of their martyrdom reached them, Imam Husayn (a.s) and Hazrat Abbas brought their bodies and laid them down in the tent of Sayyida Zainab, who was in *Sajda* offering thanks to Allah. Sayyida Zainab came to the two bodies of young sons, and addressing, them said:

"My dear children! Now I am pleased with you for you have proved your worth and laid down your lives for truth and pleased God and his Holy Prophet." Sayyida Zainab never wept for her sons although they were her only off springs.

Upon seeing Aun and Muhammad achieved martyrdom, Qasim

went to his mother, Umme Farwa, and told her that Aun and Muhammad had secured the Imam's permission on the intercession of their mother, but that he had nobody to plead on his behalf with his uncle. Seeing Hazrat Qasim so bitter and dejected, Umme Farwa recollected the letter which Imam Hasan (a.s) had left for Hazrat Qasim which was tied to his arm. It read:

"O my son Qasim, when you see your uncle Imam Husayn (a.s) surrounded by enemies at Karbala, do not spare any effort, even your life, to help him and to fight for him against his enemies and those of the Prophet. And even if you find him reluctant (in giving you permission to fight) you should insist on his permission."

Hazrat Qasim took the letter to Imam Husayn (a.s), who started weeping upon reading it as it brought back the memories of his dear brother. With effort Imam Husayn (a.s) controlled himself, turned to Hazrat Qasim and said:

"Dear child! Your father's wishes, which I regard as commands for me, leave me no other alternative. March on, Qasim, as your father wished you to do. If it is so ordained that I may bear the wound of your martyrdom, I shall bow to the will of Allah."

Reaching the battlefield, Hazrat Qasim addressed the enemy with an eloquence which reminded many of the sermons of his grand father Imam Ali (a.s). Umar bin Saad ordered his men to challenge him to single combat, fearing that this youth's eloquence might rouse the vestiges of goodness in some of his men. Hazrat Qasim fought battle with several of them and threws them from their horses as if he were a seasoned warrior and not a youth of 14, weakened by

three days thirst and hunger. Umar bin Saad, seeing Hazrat Qasim's bravery and skill, ordered his soldiers together and jointly attack Hazrat Qasim. The solitary youth now had to fend off thousand who attacked him mercilessly with swords, spears, daggers and arrows from all directions, and finally succeeded in wounding him from head to foot. When he saw that he could no longer remain in the saddle, he uttered a cry, offering his last salutation to his uncle Imam Husayn (a.s). Imam Husayn (a.s), upon reaching the battlefield, felt as if he had himself received all the wounds inflicted on Hazrat Qasim. He unsheathed his sword, and like an enraged lion, he rushed cutting through the enemy hordes. Such was the fury of his charge that the enemy was reminded of the charges of Imam Ali (a.s), in the battle of Siffin. The stampede of Yazid's soldiers was such that the body of Hazrat Qasim was trampled under the feet of hundreds of minions who were a disgrace to their calling. When Imam Husayn (a.s) reached Hazrat Qasim (a.s), he stumbled from his horse and fell to the ground exclaiming "My Allah, what have these cowards done to my Qasim?" After a while he took off his robe and started gathering the pieces of Hazrat Qasim's body. One by one he put them all in his robe and muttered: "My Qasim, your mother had sent you out dressed as a groom. Now you are returning to your mother with your body crushed to pieces."

After Hazrat Qasim's martyrdom Hazrat Abbas directed his brothers Abdullah, Jafar and Usman to advance towards the enemy. They went forward and fought the enemy in defence of Imam Husayn (a.s) and eventually fell as martyrs.

When Hazrat Abbas (a.s) approached the Imam, for permission to go to battle field he replied:-

"You are my standard bearer" to which Hazrat Abbas said "O, my master, my own life is a burden to me now, and I cannot bear this life anymore. Moreover I have to bring water for Sakina and the other thirsty children.

When Hazrat Abbas (a.s), advanced into the battlefield, his fight resembled that of his father Imam Ali (a.s), the lion of God, and true justice cannot be done to its description in a mere line or two. Hazrat Abbas's strength, valour dexterity, prowess, his devotion to the cause of truth and his attachment to Imam Husayn (a.s) are unique in the history of the world. After a terrible fight, Hazrat Abbas reached the bank of the river and filled the sack with water for the thirsty children in Imam Husayn's (a.s) camp.

Being baffled by his utter fearlessness and continued advance towards his goal, the enemy stooped to cowardly devices to overpower him. One, Hakeem bin Tufail gave a sword stroke on his right hand and severed it. Hazrat Abbas (a.s) cared more for his standard than for his life. He immediately shifted the standard to his left shoulder shouting, "Even though you have cut away my right hand I will not forsake the standard which symbolizes Faith and will protect it my till death." At this very moment an arrow struck the water sack causing the precious water to spill to the ground to his utter disappointment. The enemy was now after his second hand. Zaid bin Warqa Jehni managed to sever Hazrat Abbas's (a.s) left hand also, and when Hazrat Abbas was yet trying to support the standard with his chest, a man from Bani Tamim hit him on the head with a heavy cudgel. Hazrat Abbas (a.s) could no more balance himself and fell on the ground calling out to Imam Husayn (a.s) "O' my master come soon, I am finished." Imam Husayn (a.s) rushed to him like an eagle and saw him writhing with both his hands cut off, forehead smashed and one eye stuck with an

arrow. Soon the sacred soul of this great brother of Imam Husayn (a.s) flew to Heaven. For these reasons he came to be known as *"Saqqai Sakina"* as *"Saqqai Haram."* Since he was also given the honour of holding the standard of Imam Husayn (a.s)'s small army on the day of Ashoora, he is also known as "Alamdar-e-Husayn", the standard bearer of Imam Husayn (a.s).

Next in line to lay down his life in the cause of truth, was the Imam's son, Ali Akbar. (Born of Imam Husayn's (a.s) wife Laila bint Abi Murra,) he was in the very prime of youth. This eighteen year old son of Imam Husayn (a.s), who had the distinction of being highly similar to the Holy Prophet in looks and giant, was loved so much by everyone that the account of his leave taking from his mother, aunts, sisters and other relatives is very pathetic.

As Hazrat Ali Akbar (a.s) stepped forward in the battlefield, he was reciting these lines:-

"I am Ali the son of Husayn (a.s) and grandson of Ali (a.s). By Lord of Kabah we are entitled to the succession of the Prophet (a.s). By Allah our fate cannot be decided by the grandson of an adulteress." Hazrat Ali Akbar (a.s) made several attacks on the enemy lines. Mara bin Munqad, an enemy spearman, speared Hazrat Ali Akbar to death when he made a fresh attack. The loss of a young son grieved Imam Husayn (a.s) so much that he pronounced these words.

"May Allah condemn the party which killed you, my son. How daring this party is against Allah and his Prophet. My life has no meaning after you."

Finally when every one of his devotees was slain and none was

left on Imam Husayn's (a.s) side, he stood all alone in the field with his head resting on a lance and his garments drenched not only in his own blood but also that of his martyred son, brothers, nephews and devotees, with the enemy's forces all around him.

When Imam Husayn (a.s) stood all alone in the field surrounded by the enemies, he was summoned by a call from his sister Sayyida Zaynab in his camp. When he went into the tent, he found his baby son Ali Asghar, dying of thirst in his cradle and the poor mother Rabab, whose milk had dried up by the continuous thirst and hunger, could not help the baby with even a drop of milk. Telling the mother that he would show the baby to the enemy and try to get some water for him, Imam Husayn (a.s) took the baby to the field. In the battlefield he stood at a lofty place and said:-

"O' People! If, in your opinion, Husayn is guilty of any sin or crime, this innocent baby has done nothing to hurt any one of you. He can not even speak and has not even uttered anything against you or your Amir at Damascus. He is dying of thirst. He has had neither milk nor water for the last three days. Would you quench his thirst by a few drops of water? If you suspect that I demand water for myself in the name of the baby, then I will leave him here, if you want, and go away and you may return him with his thirst quenched."

It is reported that this address and the scene, presented of the Imam with the thirsty innocent baby in his arms, was so poignant that even the men in the enemy's army could not help being moved to tears. Weeping, they cursedYazid and his Deputy Ibn Ziyad, Governor of Kufa. Ibn Saad, fearing a revolt of his forces in sympathy for Imam Husayn (a.s), at once ordered a stone hearted brute named Hurmula to answer Imam Husayn (a.s). The tyrant shot a three pronged arrow

usually reserved for the slaying of animals, from his bow, which, after piercing the Imam's arm, became lodged in the tiny neck of the innocent baby. Blood flowing from his neck, the baby looked at his father's face, smiled and stopped breathing forever. Imam Husayn (a.s) collected the blood that poured out of the frail neck of his baby son in his hand. It is reported that when he wanted to pour it on the earth, Imam Husayn (a.s) heard a voice saying from the earth:-

"O Holy Imam! I cannot bear this innocent blood." And when Imam Husayn (a.s) wanted to throw the blood towards heaven, he heard a voice saying:-

"O Holy Imam! Throw not the innocent blood towards me for I cannot bear it."

And Urdu poet has versified the event:-

*"Inkar aasman ko hai, Razi Zami Nahi Asghar*

*Tumhare Khoon Ka Thikana Kahin nahi."*

Finally Imam Husayn (a.s) smeared his face with the blood of the innocent baby, Ali Asghar.

Imam Husayn (a.s) could not take the dead baby to be returned to his mother who was waiting anxiously for it, at the door of her tent in the camp. Hence he sat down to bury his baby son in the burning sand of the desert. Does not this single sacrifice suffice to touch every human heart? Can we not call this one sacrifice alone greater than the sacrifice offered by Hazrat Ibrahim? God alone knows the degree of the patience, which he had endowed Imam Husayn (a.s) to bear with such a series unbearable calamities.

The details of the final separation of Imam Husayn (a.s) from the helpless ladies and children and other inmates of his camp, particularly from his sisters Zaynab and Umme-Kulsum, are heart-rending. Imam Husayn (a.s), after bidding farewell to all the helpless inmates, of his camp, went to Imam Zainul Abideen (a.s.) who was lying unconscious on his sick bed. He woked him and hand over the charge of the sacred office of *Imamat*. He enumerated the difficulties and the tortures that would befall him immediately following his martyrdom. He advised him to observe the highest degree of patience and fortitude against every aggression that would be inflicted on him. To Sayyida Zainab, his sister, he exhorted in particular to bear every hardship and torture with extreme patience, and never to curse the enemy for her curse would surely invoke the wrath of Allah.

In Karbala, Imam Husayn (a.s) was not only demonstrating the degree of fortitude, patience and perseverance he was capable of but was also laying down lasting lessons for following Islamic laws and commandments. Imam Husayn (a.s) was now 57 years old. With the killing of all his faithful supporters and companions before his own eyes he was completely run down in spirits. With the martyrdom of Hazrat Ali Akbar the light of his eyes was virtually gone. Abbas's death had broken his back. The death of other dear and near ones had removed all zest of life from his heart. Nevertheless Islam does not allow mere submission before the enemy without any attempt at self defence. In fact, in Islam self-defence is not only the right, but also the duty of every individual. Imam Husayn (a.s) was yet to discharge his duty of self-defence by resisting the ever pressing attempt of the enemy to end his holy life. Imam Husayn (a.s) performed this obligation of self-defence in a set of circumstances in which no one else could have done so.

All accounts of history on the tragedy of Karbala bear testimony to the fact that in fighting with the enemy. Imam Husayn (a.s) displayed such matchless courage and bravery that all in the enemy lines were so struck with terror and fear that none could face him in single combat.

At one point during this godly fighting by Imam Husayn (a.s), he repulsed the enemy lines so fiercely that they got scattered and yielded him passage to the river. Thereupon Haseen bin Tamim feared that Imam Husayn (a.s) would become all the more dreadful if he succeeded in quenching his thirst so he hit his lips with an arrow shot. Imam Husayn (a.s) thanked Allah even in such a state. In order to detract Imam Husayn (a.s) from his continued assaults on the enemy ranks, Shimr turned towards the family tents, intending to plunder them and insult the ladies. Imam Husayn (a.s) could not tolerate this, and shouted to Shimr, demanding him to desist from such a shameless act a least for the sake of Arab tradition, if not for religious scruples, during Imam Husayn's (a.s) life time. Shimr got embarrassed and turned back, but he succeeded in getting Imam Husayn (a.s) encircled by men of the infantry. Still Imam Husayn (a.s) scattered and broke the circle whichever side he turned with his sword. A soldier in the enemy camp has summed up the then state of affairs in these words:

"I never saw a man having lost all companions and relatives, so grievously injured as Imam Husayn (a.s) who faced the enemy who had encircled him but scattered them even then whenever he liked by attacking them with his sword and the soldiers ran away like lambs."

Imam Husayn (a.s) was proclaiming, 'Remember Allah would be terribly displeased if you kill me. I swear Allah would honour me inspite of your insulting me. I will be vindicated in the way

you can never think or imagine of. Remember you would be divided through quarrels among yourselves after my assassination and ultimately your blood too shall be shed. This would be in addition to punishment in the life after death.

Imam Husayn (a.s) then recalling his brave companions, and uttered:

"O Muslim bin Aqeel, O Hani bin Urwa, O Habib bin Mazahir, O Zuhair bin Qaim, O Muslim bin Ausaja, O courageous warriors of the battle-field, I am calling out to you for help why do you not respond? Yes, indeed, you are asleep. I expected you to hasten to my help but I realize that death separates you from your Imam and prevents you from coming to my help. The grand daughters of your Holy Prophet are in despair since your martyrdom and are lamenting on your sad ends. O' honoured ones, awaken from your sleep and drive away these wretched tyrants from the ladies of the House of the Holy Prophet. Alas! Death has overcome you and the treacherous world has betrayed you; otherwise you would not have spared any effort to rescue me and would not have left my call unanswered. So here we are lamenting over you, crying for very soon. *Inaalillahi wa Inna ilaihi rajioon.* Verily we are Allah's and to Him do we return."

Now Shimr called out all his men and re-arrayed the lines to fight one single individual .namely Imam Husayn (a.s). He made the horsemen take position behind the footmen and ordered the archers to commence shooting arrows at the Imam. Once again Shimr shouted to his men. "O' wretched men, why do you not kill him?" Being taunted in this way, the whole force pounced upon Imam Husayn (a.s) and surrounded him from all sides. A rain of arrows, swords and spears was showered upon him till he dismounted his horse that too must have been badly wounded.

Even after disembarking Imam Husayn (a.s) continued fighting and warding off blows from himself for as long as he could.

Finally it became impossible for Imam Husayn (a.s) to withstand the attacks and assaults from swords, spears and other weapons and ultimately he collapsed.

Just then Imam Husayn (a.s) noticed that the time for Asr prayer had commenced. Though extremely enfeebled and unable to stand, he busied himself in the last prayer of his holy life in a sitting posture.

Once again swords, spears and axes began falling on him, as he lay wounded from head to foot, the sacred blood of the Holy Prophet, Ali and Fatima flowing on the earth. When Imam bent in his first prostration of Asr prayer, the accursed Shimr had the audacity climb astride his back and severed his sacred head with a dagger.

By the time Shimr's dagger had finished the heinous sin of beheading, the collapsed body of the Imam (a.s.), was in the state of prostration before Allah and the lips, moving , were heard to say:-

"O All Merciful Allah, accept the humble sacrifice of your Husayn (a.s), who has submitted in your way all that you have given him. If this son of your Holy Prophet had anything more, he would have submitted that also to you-But O' Allah forgive the sinners among the faithful, O' all-Merciful One."

While Imam Husayn (a.s) was being mercilessly decapitated, the helpless ladies and innocent children in Imam Husayn's (a.s) camp stood at their tents weeping aloud and shouting for help. Sayyida Zaynab ran bare-headed from her tent towards her

brother, shouting to Ibn Saad for mercy, but Ibn Saad's heart was utterly devoid of mercy

When Imam Husayn's head was severed from his body and raised on the point of a lance, the head began glorifying Allah, aloud in clear words:-

"Allahu Akbar (i.e Allah the greatest)". Thus ended the tragic chapter of the sacred life of this great hero of mankind in the after noon of Friday the 10th of Muharram in the year 61 A.H.

When Sayyida Zaynab could not see her brother on horse back she came out of the tent. But alas! Where could she go? The enemy men were galloping their horses everywhere. She began to shout "O' ruthless ones! Is there no Muslim among you to help the lonely grandson of the Prophet (a.s)?" None heeded her words. She climbed a mount now known as "Till-e-Zaynabiya" i.e the mound of Ḥazrat Zaynab. From this mound she saw the harrowing scene and in desperation shouted to Umar bin Saad! "O' Son of Saad, May Allah cut short your progeny! The grandson of the Prophet is being slain and you are silently watching!"

The brutes now turned towards the camp which contained only the helpless waiting ladies, the crying children, and Imam Zayn al Abideen (a.s.), the ailing and unconscious son of Imam Husayn (a.s). They plundered the camp, setting the tents on fire. The gentle and noble ladies, who were unique models of chaste and modest womanhood, ran distraught, from one burning tent to another in a vain attempt to save their lives as well as preserve their chastity. The brutes took the ladies and the children as captives, and the weak and the sick Imam Zainul-Abideen, was bound in heavy thorny chains.

The evening of Ashoora, the 10th of Muharram, which is known as Sham-e-Ghariban was full of sorrow and grief for the bereaved women and children of Imam Husayn (a.s) and his associates, who were martyred during the day. Their men had all departed from this world, their property had been snatched away, the tents had been burnt to ashes. Further in addition to these calamities, the women as well as the children had all being deprived of food and water for the last three days.

Even the dead body of Imam Husayn (a.s) was not spared from humiliation and tortore. Soon after Imam Husayn (a.s) had been slain, his severed head was exhibited on a spear head, With drums being beaten in jubilation of this awful event. Then Umar bin Saad ordered that the headless body of the Imam should be trampled under horses; hooves. For this inhumane purpose ten horsemen were selected and made to run over the sacred corpse from on end to the other several times. The clothes of the holy body were also robbed by several persons.

The animosity borne by the enemy towards Imam Husayn (a.s) did not lend with the taking of his life and the lives of his relatives and companions but was further demonstrated on their treatment of the members of his family consisting of defenseless women and children. While on one side the ceremonies of jubilation were in full swing in the enemy ranks, on the other side the tents of Imam Husayn (a.s) were being ransacked not only for the sake of property contained therein but mainly by way of insult. The plunderess sought to cause disgrace to the Holy Prophet (s.a.) as these were the only remnants of the sacred family of that great leader of Islam. It needs no specific mention that for true Muslims who are supposed to bear faith in the high position of the Holy Prophet (a.s) as a cardinal ingredient of Islam, the tent of Imam Husayn (a.s) must certainly be equal in rank to the Holy Kabah. It contained all the sacred belongings

of the Holy Prophet (a.s) and of Ameerul Momineen Ali (a.s). It was therefore clearly an act of flagrant sacrilege on the part of the enemy who, under the guise of being Muslims nevertheless felt no shame or guilt at having set such a holy tent on fire.

Finally at about dusk, even the hearts of the enemy men melted in grief. Some of them went to Umar bin Saad and said: O' chief! With your orders we poured down a rain of destruction and ruin on the family of the Prophet and killed Imam Husayn (a.s), but what is the fault of these helpless women and children? Now the young ones have begun to die of hunger and thirst. So send some food and water for them.

Umar replied: "Do whatever you like." On getting the permission of their chief, the enemy men were worried as to who should be sent with food and drink to the bereaved family of Imam Husayn (a.s) as every one was feeling too ashamed to face them. First, the wife of Sinan bin Anas was asked to go but she replied; How can I go there? My husband pierced with a lance the liver of Ali Akbar (a.s)." Then the wife of Hurmula bin Kalil Asadi was approached, but she said: "What face can I show them, as my husband pierced the tiny throat of infant Ali Asghar with a deadly arrow." Shimr's wife was asked to go but she also declined as her husband had slain the Imam (a.s) with his own hand and severed his head. At last the wife of Hur bin Yazid-e-Riyahee was selected for this job and she consented to perform it.

Hur's wife came up weeping towards Sayyida Zaynab (a.s) and pleaded: "My revered lady, I am Hur's wife I have come to condole your brother's demise and I have brought some food for the children." Sayyida Zainab hung her arms round the neck of Hur's wife and lamented: "O' our guest's spouse, we are

sorry to state that your husband came to us as a guest and we could not show him any hospitality. Let me condole you for your husband's martyrdom.

Sayyida Zainab saw the food and drink and with tearful eyes, she turned her face towards the barren dessert and said: "My beloved brother, how can I swallow food and drink?" Then turning towards Hur's wife she said, "O' lady! For whom have you brought all this? All our men, young and old have passed away thirsty. Even the six month old infant Ali Asghar could not get water to quench his thirst. Now the mere sight of it rends our hearts. Take it back because now we are neither hungry nor thirsty."

With persistent requests the wife of Hur put the food and water before the ladies and departed. In no report do we find that any adult woman there ate or drank anything that night.

On the 10th of Muharram Umar bin Saad supervised the burial for the dead bodies of his soldiers, whereas the dead bodies of Imam Husayn (a.s) and his companions were left unburied and unattended. Here it is to be borne in mind that according to Islamic law it is collectively obligatory on all Muslims who come to know of the death of a Muslim, to bury him with the required preliminaries like funeral prayer etc. In Karbala, the chief of the Muslims, the living direct representative of the Holy Prophet of Islam and his companions, all *muslims* of high standing were lying slain on the bare ground but none in Umar bin Saad army had the Islamic sense to burry them, though they professed to be Muslims.

It is related that after the army of Umar bin Saad had left the place, the people of Bani Asad of Ghazarriya who lived at a little distance from Karbala buried the dead bodies of Imam

Husayn (a.s) and his men, quite evidently not before the 12th of Muharram i.e on the third day of the martyrdom.

On the morning of 11th Muharram, the entire army of Umar bin Saad prepared themselves for its march back to Kufa with the severed heads of the martyrs raised on their lances. When the much touted caravan entered Damascus, at the orders of Yazid, the whole town was ordered to be fully decorated and the people to be engaged in rejoicing. When the looted caravan of the Holy House of the Prophet passed through the public streets and busy bazaars, people in huge numbers thronged to catch a glimpse of the captives. The godly ladies of the family of the Holy Imam who were captives, felt mortally ashamed and insulted and hid their holy faces beneath the hair of their heads. While the sorrow stricken ladies were seated on the bare backs of camels, with the hair of their heads covering their faces, the heads of the martyrs raised on the point of the lances were marching before them. The poor ladies sometimes looked at the heads of their martyred husbands, brothers and children, with tears flowing from their eyes. The children seeing the severed heads of their loved ones cried aloud innocently calling them to return to them and to relieve them of their torturous miseries.

After being paraded through the crowded streets and the busy bazaars, thronged with the rejoicing public, the ladies and the children, tied in ropes and the sick Imam Zainul Abideen (a.s.) in chains, were presented openly to Yazid in his court, where he was surrounded by hundreds of his courtiers. Yazid sitting on the throne, kept the severed head of Imam Husayn (a.s) in front of him. Drinking wine, he ridiculed the Holy Imam and his family who were standing before him utterly helpless and bound in ropes as captives. At this stage, Sayyida Zainab (a.s), the daughter of Imam Ali (a.s) stood in the court of Yazid and said,

"Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and blessings to his Prophet and all his descendents. The Great Allah has indeed revealed the truth when he said, "The end of those who persist in sin and evil is that they falsify the Divine revelations and mock them." O Yazid! When you blocked our paths on the face of the earth and in the heavens and compelled us to go from place to place like prisoners, did you consider us to be degraded before God and yourself exalted? Is it because you met with material success and found all your affairs in order and there was no threat to your rule from us that you were filled with pride and gloried in your pomp and power? Yet wait a while! Have you forgotten the words of Allah, 'Let not those who disbelieve think that my silence and forbearance is good for their seeks; rather it is to give increase to their sins and for them is a painful punishment.' Is it justice, O son of a freed slave, (In the 8th A.H, when Prophet Muhammad, conquered Makka, Abu Sufian, the grandfather of Yazid, was captured. But the Prophet freed him, so the descendents of Abu Sufian were called 'sons of a freed slave.') that you should keep your women folk and maid servants in seclusion while the daughters of the Prophet of Allah are imprisoned and taken form place to place. You have deprived them of their cloaks and head coverings and they have been taken by their enemies from town to town exposed to the eyes of all. There was left with them none among their men folk who would protect them nor anyone to give them help. What better can be expected of him (Yazid) who has chewed the liver of good and pure persons and who has nurtured on the blood of martyrs? What can be expected of those enemies of the Ahl ul Bayt who look on us with hatred and envy? Now without any sense of guilt, you sit in your court and with your cane strike the teeth of Abi Abd-Allah al-Husayn (a.s), the leader of the youths of Paradise, and say, "Had my forbearers who were killed at Badr been present, they would have praised me and been pleased with me and would have

said "O Yazid! May your hands never be enfeebled?" Why should you not say this and rejoice when you have shed the blood of the stars-on-earth of the children of Muhammad and the family of Mutalib (grandfather of the Prophet). You have revived our grief and have tried to uproot us completely, you call upon your forefathers, but soon you shall join them where they have already reached. Then you shall wish your hands had been paralized and that you had been deaf and dumb; had not spoken what you have said nor acted as you have done. Oh Allah, exact our rights and avenge those who have oppressed us, have shed our blood and have killed our supporters, By Allah, By Allah, you have torn your own skin and cut your own flesh (you have been instrumental in your own evil fate). You shall face the Prophet of Allah guilty of shedding the blood of his kindred and of disrespecting his family. Soon Allah unites them, shall vindicate their rights and shall help them. Do not think them to be dead who are killed in the way of Allah; rather they are alive and receive sustenance from their Lord. It is sufficient for you that Allah shall be your judge and Muhammad your antagonist. Soon whose who helped you and established your rule over believers shall come to know how evil is the fate of the oppressors, how terrible is the end and how weak are your forces. The present upheaval has compelled me to address one like you; yet I look down on you as one mean and contemptible and censure your heritage and why should I not do so when tears flow from my eyes and my heart is wounded. How strange and unnatural it is that the followers of Satan and freed slaves have killed the pure men of Allah and with their hands have shed our blood and with their mouths have chewed our flesh. Now birds and wild animals are lamenting over these sacred dead. If you treat us as spoils of war and as your slaves then you shall be meted with a terrible punishment and you shall be avenged for what your hands have done, and Allah does not in any way oppress his creatures.

Our cry for redress is to Allah alone and of Him do we seek Help; so contrive your plots and intensify your efforts and strive your utmost, for, by Allah, you shall be unable to efface our commemoration or to achieve our exalted status. Neither shall you ever succeed in cleansing yourself or the stains of your guilt and shame. Your intentions are mean and your origin base, and nothing is left of your life but a little, and there is no army to defend you, save a disorderly band. Be prepared for the Day when a caller shall call out that the curse of Allah is upon oppressors.

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, who bestowed success and mercy on the first amongst us (The Prophet) and Martyrdom and Blessings on the last amongst us (Imam Husayn (a.s)). We pray to Allah that He should perfect their reward and increase His favours and bless them with leadership. Allah is Merciful, kind and Sufficient for us, and He is the best of Judges." (al-Luhoof P.79)

Thus, in the light of the events narrated, it is clear that the real and ultimate aim of Yazid was not only to kill Imam Husayn (a.s) for his refusing to swear allegiance, but also to remove from the scene all opposition to his authority as the supreme head of Islam. Undoubtedly Yazid was directly and personally responsible for all the atrocities perpetrated on Imam Husayn (a.s), and after his martyrdom, on the members of his bereaved family. It was he who sent his royal edict to the governor of Medina, the throne of caliphate, to demand allegiance from Imam Husayn (a.s). It was he who sent men to Makka to apprehend and kill Imam Husayn (a.s). It was he who appointed Ubaidullah Ibn Ziyad as governor of Kufa and gave full powers to him to deal with Imam Husayn (a.s) and his supporters as severely as he wished. If it were not so, and the insulting treatment meted out to the family of Imam Husayn (a.s) after his martyrdom

was not in accordance with Yazid's orders and wishes, then Ibn Ziyad should have sent them to Medina from Karbala instead of sending them to Yazid at Damishq. But it is well-known that Ibn Ziyad detained the bereaved family in Kufa, waiting for Yazid's orders, and that the severed heads of the martyrs were cereomously presented to Yazid along with the members Imam Husayn's (a.s) bereaved family while he was surrounded by his courtiers. After the parading and public show of the captive members it was no longer possible for Yazid to evade the responsibility of being the real perpetrator of these atrocities.

Before the great martyrdom of Imam Husayn (a.s) and his companions, there had certainly been great sacrifices in the cause of Truth and Righteousness, but they were all by individual leaders. The sacrifice offered by Imam Husayn (a.s) stands as singularly unique in so far as it was not only by a single individual, but by a whole band of selfless lovers of truth, which comprised not men alone but also women and even children of different ages. Imam Husayn's greatness further increased as he succeeded in instilling the love for truth and righteousness in the minds of his companions to such an extent that every one of them seemed like Imam Husayn (a.s) himself. In this way there was not only one Husayn (a.s), in the field of Karbala but 72 individuals with equally strong determination and will to defend the truth.

Due date

**HOLY QURAN SAYS:**

Say: "Verily my prayer and my sacrifice, my life and my death (all of them) are for Allah, the Lord of the worlds." [6:163]

(To the righteous it will be said): "0 you tranquil soul, Return to your Lord well-pleased (with him) and (He) well-pleased (with you); Enter then among My servants, Enter then my garden." [89 : 27-30]

Well known non-Muslim scholar said:

"The martyrdom of Imam Husayn (a.s.) is a demonstration of the victory of faith and morality over the belief and hypocricy as it does that of merit over demerit, of truth over falsehood and of the spirit over matter. On this account the whole of mankind can call Imam Husayn (a.s.) as their very own; without distinction of age, climate, colour or the geographical boundaries, men can claim that Imam Husayn (a.s.) belongs to them.

The martyrdom of Imam Husayn (a.s.) is a matter of fact the death knell of Yazid. Islam came into new life after Karbala.

**PEERMAHOMED EBRAHIM TRUST**